

MARVEL MASTERWORKS
THE MIGHTY THOR
VOLUME 22



THE MIGHTY THOR Nos. 328-336
ANNUAL No. 11 & MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL No. 33
ALAN ZELENETZ, BOB HALL & MARK BRIGHT

M A R V E L M A S T E R W O R K S
P R E S E N T S

THE MIGHTY THOR

V O L U M E 22

C O L L E C T I N G

T H E M I G H T Y T H O R N O S . 328-336
A N N U A L N O . 11 & M A R V E L G R A P H I C N O V E L N O . 33

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MARVEL MASTERWORKS

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MARVEL MASTERWORKS

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GODS WILL BE GODS ...

BY ALAN ZELENETZ

If you're reading this introduction, you might have borrowed this book on paper or iPad from a cool local library. (Please give that discerning librarian a No-Prize!) Or maybe—like a member of the Merry Marvel Marching Society “in days of yore” (that’s classic Thor language for “way before Billie Eilish was born”)—you’ve been saving that lunch money to acquire each *Marvel Masterworks: The Mighty Thor* volume for your own. Either way, smart move. They’re true works of art, worth every penny and worthy of a Shakespeare. Worthy, too, of the Shakespearean talents of Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, with a scripting assist from Stan’s kid brother Larry Lieber, who launched *The Mighty Thor* on his heroic way in *Journey into Mystery* #83, dated August 1962.

As I write this introduction, it’s now sixty summers to the year from Thor’s first appearance. New York is sweltering in a heat wave. But, hey, who’s complaining about a three-digit heat index when there’s Thor tales from the ’80s, beckoning? So here goes. One look and I’m brought back to breezier days, when Marvel had its offices at 575 Madison Avenue (that’s zip code 10022, for you hardcore completists out there) on the island of Manhattan, NYC.

575 Madison. That’s where my personal Marvel origin story begins, in the ground floor lobby right off the street. (If you’re willing to forgive the platitude, you could say I literally worked my way from the ground floor up in this business.) It was a month since I’d left a job as budding high school principal, and I was contemplating an alternate career move. Understand that, like any kid Brooklyn born and bred, I was always a fevered fan of comics. I offer this information only for lack of any other way to explain why, based evidently more on a lark than logic, I decided that—next job?—hey, since I so loved comic books, why not try my own hand at writing them?

You’re thinking, “Ummh. Okay? Random.”

As you might guess, after countless cold calls to Marvel artists...then writers...then editors whose names are listed in pre-internet telephone books, I learn what it feels like on the losing end of an LA Dodger Clayton Kershaw shutout. Subsequent badgering of anyone I know for “Any connections?” leads likewise nowhere. Until—I just want to get this straight—my sister-in-law’s friend’s cousin’s best friend’s daughter (a chain of that sort, beginning, indeed, with my actual sister-in-law) turns out to be an acquaintance of the wife of an editor at Marvel Comics by the name of Mark Gruenwald. Yes, *that* Mark Gruenwald, universally beloved by the Bullpen, impressively mustachioed and absolutely the nicest guy you’d ever wanna meet. And Mark, rightfully begrudging and understandably against his will and better judgment, agrees to do that acquaintance a favor of meeting with this nobody-in-particular. Conditions: not a second more than fifteen minutes; in the lobby; no elevator access to the offices. (Sigh, no Bullpen.) Tick-tock, two minutes left. Mark’s summation, “Here’s the scoop. Sorry. No can do.” I turn to pick up my bookbag to leave and Mark rightfully ghosts me.

But the lobby receptionist remains, nametagged...memory’s foggy here...can we say Erica? She’s the one who’d paged Mark from upstairs and saw us meeting. So, before heading out to the street, I drift toward Erica to “Thanks again for your help,” noting her fondness for the cookies at her front desk then leaving.

Stubborn last-ditch effort. Returning uninvited to the lobby a week later, I casually present Erica a package of Pepperidge Farm Milano® cookies from my bookbag as I white lie, “I’m late to my meeting with Mark upstairs.” Smiling, Erica, for whom I have only capital “G” Gratitude, nods toward the elevator. Five minutes later, after fumbling my way into an office shared by editors Mark G. and Tom DeFalco, I find myself actually down on my knees pleading to let me spend just one day, see if

I even want to do something like this. “Who *is* this guy?” Tom asks. “Used to be a principal,” Mark hisses through clenched teeth while casting a mild death stare down in my direction. “A principal?” Tom’s addressing *me* now. “You know how to spell?” “To spell? Sure. A principal, former English, Classics, and Comp Lit major.” T turns to M, “He can do some proofreading, for free?” Mark, now mindfully breathing in...two-three-four...exhales, pauses and grunts, “Free proofreading. Yeah. Fine.”

Fast forward about a month. I’m scrunched in the corner of a hallway near the mailroom at a student-sized desk circling spelling errors with a non-photo-blue pencil on 11" x 17" Bristol board pages of original art for upcoming comics. Suddenly, Big Jim Shooter, editor-in-chief who casts a long shadow, is looming over my shoulder asking if I’m the guy doing free proofreading? Overawed, I nod hesitantly. Jim says, “Well, you can’t.” My mouth goes dry. I figure grace period over or, damn, I’ve infringed on Proofreaders’ Union rules. “You’ve got to get paid,” Jim declares, adding, “so go get some vouchers from Virginia Romita.”

That’s how I become a nominal Marvel freelancer. And, thus, saddled up with a longtime love of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Lovecraft and Poe, horror films galore and comic books of all genres, classical mythology and medieval legends, Tolkien, Asimov and Bradbury and Anne McCaffrey, I spur forward, not knowing if I’m about to go from the ridiculous to the sublime or vice versa. Soon, answering a last-minute letters column comes my way. Then, a couple of short filler pieces. And...

...Flash forward to 387 Park Avenue South, Marvel’s next home base (zip code 10016 for the completists). Somehow, in a Bullpen dominated by best-selling super hero titles, my own creative interests, leaning to myth and legend, fantasy and sci-fi, though relatively uncommon at the time, help me carve out a modest, comfortable second-stringer niche. I become beneficiary of the editorial tutelage of Denny O’Neil and Ralph Macchio, Carl Potts, Danny Fingerioth and Jim Owsley (later to become Christopher Priest). Collaborators like illustrators Charles Vess, John Buscema, Frank Cirocco, Chris Warner and Barry Windsor-Smith among a host of other masterful and friendly helping hands kindly, patiently, with good humor and professional seriousness always, tolerate this amateur, teach him tricks of the trade and guide him to an understanding of the unique ways of visual storytelling. And soon, beginner’s-luck, I’m given a chance to write, among other things, tales of the moon god Khonshu and, yes!, sword-and-sorcery adventures of Kings Conan and Kull in the fantasy realms created by Robert E. Howard.

And then, the reason you’re here today. Courtesy of my mentor supremo, Mark Gruenwald, I get a shot at a Marvel super hero straight out of mythology, wielder of the uru hammer Mjolnir, Thor the God of Thunder. Sure, the niche I was in cut against the grain for some, and I still have a memo in my possession that once went out to the editorial crew from one of their fellow editors, offering my freelance availability that month while damning my efforts with faint praise as “Our answer to Milton – Fred Milton (Rewrites all those classics that bored you in high school in comic form.)” I saved that memo as a sort of “*memento hubris*,” like Odin’s lessons of humility to Thor, reminding me to always stay humble.

Mark was an animated mythology buff, excited by legend and lore. He and I found ourselves sharing enthusiasms, very often with Mark’s good buddy, Ralph Macchio, who was also my all-around-good-times-with-and-inspirational editor on both *Kull the Conqueror* and occasional *Thor* one-shots. Ralph was a grand aficionado of comics, a fine appraiser of fantasy fiction, pulp and literary alike and a great foil to any *over*-enthusiasms, contributing valuable laughs and invaluable insights to our conversations and plotting sessions.

Mark himself was wide-eyededly fascinated with the idea of mixing the mythic, the metaphysical and the Marvel Universe. This fascination led to a creatively combustible combination plotted by the two of us for *Thor Annual* #10, which features as opening act in *Marvel Masterworks: The Mighty Thor Vol. 21*.

That story started with an envelope-pushing imitation of the biblical Book of Genesis then transformed into a cosmogonic Marvel myth introducing Demogorge the God-Eater as super villain supreme. Bob Hall's penciling talents and bold lines brought that *Annual* to muscular life, so it was a great treat to get to work with Bob again on "The Saga of Thor" for *Annual* #11 and on the two-part "Coming of the Crusader" (#330) and "Holy War" (#331). The pair of Crusader issues is action-packed to be sure, but when the dust clears we're left pondering some serious questions about the evolution of religious beliefs and the perils of fanaticism. All this, another prime example of Mark's prodding us towards mytho-theological boundary-pushing.

"Hey," cries the reader, "I signed up for a comic book here, not a Schopenhauer seminar! Bah. Fred Milton."

Worry not, dear reader. There are super-heroics aplenty here as well, intergalactic adventure and fantasy galore, even Betty and Veronica-style jealousy and romance. In fact, let's conclude this intro with a brief preview, and an insight or few from one writer's perspective, on the stories ahead.

Be prepared for a season of simmering tension as our super heroes contend with a serious case of "Chicago vs. Asgard Syndrome." As you'll see for yourselves, and no insult intended to America's beloved Windy City, Thor's beloved Sif yearns for the full-on fantasy of Asgard's celestial realms. Yes, somewhere over the Rainbow Bridge, that's where Sif longs to be, far from mundane Midgard's stiff clothes, stifling social conventions, urban-sprawl, traffic jams, and, not least, its uncertain state of mortality. Thor's heart belongs to Asgard, too, though his moral compass points due south to Midgard, where he feels he can do the most good, actually even live a fuller life on Earth.

A fuller life on Earth? This will turn into an especially dire predicament for the God of Thunder at the end of this volume in *Marvel Graphic Novel* #33 – *I, Whom the Gods Would Destroy*. The two Jims, Shooter and Owsley, depict a desperate, soul-searching Don Blake/Thor, as he (they?) attempts to grapple with the "gift" of mortal perception. It's a provocative tale, packs a powerful gut punch and culminates in an emotional crescendo that brings down the curtain fittingly on this collection.

Be prepared, too, to blame "CvA Syndrome" for being a constant source of conflict, romance, and drama in Thor's worlds. Doug Moench sets the tone in "Violence in Video" (#328). "No Asgardian born would be content here," declaims Thor to his fellow Norse gods as they prepare to depart Earth after having aided in vanquishing the Midgard Serpent. Surprisingly for someone who herself derides the Blue Planet "where mortals plod their endlessly dull existence," Sif, impulsively quidding-pro-quo, offers to give Earth a try if Thor would only answer "I will" to her spur-of-the moment marriage proposal.

The two worlds of Asgard and Midgard also reflect a recurrent theme of the mythic and the modern. This modern myth motif harks back to Jack Kirby himself, who reminisced in a 1992 interview that he "knew the Thor legends very well, but I wanted to modernize them. I felt that might be a new thing for comics, taking the old legends and modernizing them."

And this leads us somewhat inevitably (though with lightheartedly less academic pomp) to ponder these Thor stories through the perspective of pop culture critics. Nowadays we've got professors studying the relationship between twenty-first century super heroes and ancient deities. And, in the end, What's It All About, Spidey, if not the (maybe-not-so) simple battle between Good and Evil and the future of all humankind? Check out, for example, Thor's rib-crushing combat against the rabid religious fanaticism of the Crusader, already mentioned above, and witness the quasi-religious cult of the Prince of Vampires, Count Dracula, who dismisses the hammer Mjolnir as "a pretty relic of a forgotten religion" while nefariously scheming toward the infernal day that "all of humanity will bow down to me" in the two-parter, "Blood of a Goddess" (#332) and "...Like a Bat out of Heaven!"

(#333). Doctor Strange makes a crucial guest appearance in this storyline, so let's toss supernatural magic too into the brew of options for anyone, mortal or immortal, who's seeking some sort of faith, belief, or truth, sacred or profane, to sustain them.

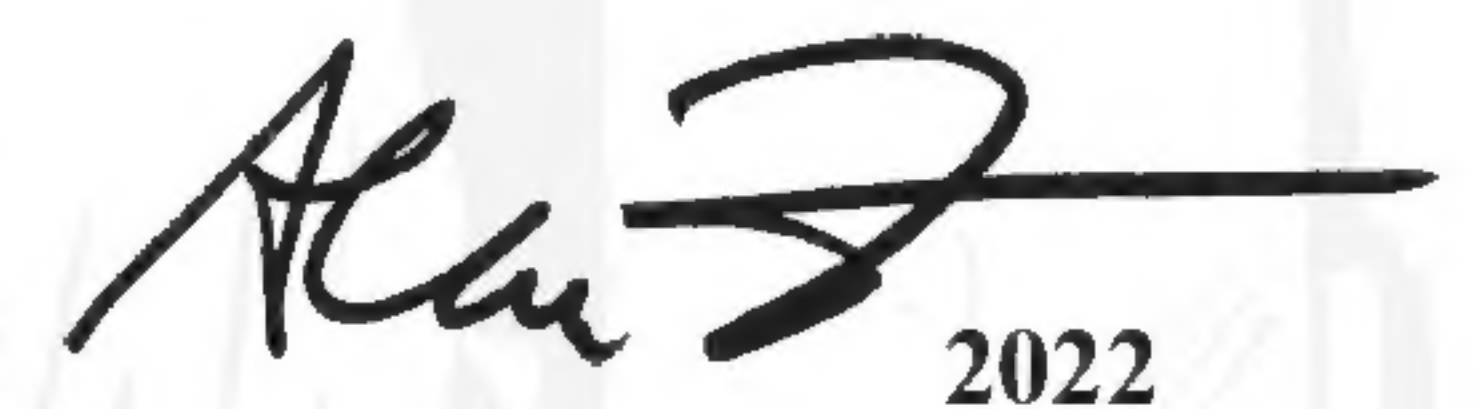
If you're feeling nostalgic for a conventional '80s TV crime show like *Columbo*, look no further than the story arc in issues #331-335. Cue a noir splash page. Don Blake's accused of murdering his former love, Jane Foster. Thor is desperate to prove Blake innocent. This leads god and goddess, much to Sif's delight, into a sprawling intergalactic clash of arms on the planet Rus in "Runequest" (#334) and "Runequest's End" (#335). They encounter Kamo Tharnn (a sort of Elder-of-the-Universe counterpart to Tim Berners-Lee) who's created The Master Library, a galactic-wide-web of data-coils containing All Knowledge. By means of the Runestaff in Tharnn's possession, the royal pair wage battle royale in inner and outer spaces on a dangerous search to locate Jane Foster's body and soul. By Runequest's end, there'll be secrets revealed...and secrets still kept.

The final single issue here, #336, winds down modestly with two stories that echo earlier themes. In "Of Gods and Men," Sif, solitary and brooding on the weary existence of mortals, seems ready to call Earth quits. Herb Trimpe's last strip of panels on the bottom of page eleven captures the bittersweet moment wonderfully and at the same time brings us back to Thor's first appearance in *Journey into Mystery*. "A Distant Music," the follow-up story reveals a lovelorn Sif now back in her zone on Asgard, living a divine warrior huntress's life, yet recounting her earthly love life to Queen Frigga and still dreaming of the day Odin's celestial palace halls will ring harpfully with her bridal song.

Thor Annual #11 begins and stays for the most part in legendary Asgard. It's a mini-myth-marathon of tales relating "The Saga of Thor" from hero's birth to humbling adulthood and borrows freely from Norse mythology. "The Saga" introduces a sampling of young Loki (sorry, not so cute as Baby Yoda), Eitri the Dwarf, giants and boar gods. In a detour from the royal realms, it imagines historical Vikings who once worshipped Thor, the Prince of Gods, on Earth. The *Annual* ends with a recounting of the original Marvel origin of Thor, his transformation at Odin's paternal will into the earthly guise of Donald Blake and his growth beyond "brash youth and...self-conceit" into, as the Norn Sisters exclaim, the worthy "God of Thunder Now and forever."

So, there you have it. In many ways, you can call this volume unassumingly traditional, a bit old-fashioned perhaps, but true nonetheless—maybe at times too true in a pastiche-y sort of way—to the Thor ethos as its original creators, Stan and Jack, imagined it. Well, just you wait. We're here in the calm before the Simonson. In the forthcoming *Marvel Masterworks: The Mighty Thor Vol. 23*, Beta Ray Bill will storm onto an iconic cover and into the narrative of issue #337, wielding a humdinger of a hammer, moving fast and breaking things well before Mark Zuckerberg learned to even cut and paste.

"We accept the myths we need to sustain us, those that give us hope, purpose, and pride," suggests a recent biography of JFK. Rings true. We Marvel Bullpeners, past and present, feel honored and privileged to have brought and continue to bring you the fabulous saga of *Thor* over so many years. Our common goal? To entertain and thrill, for sure. But if along the way our collaborative efforts to sustain the myth of *The Mighty Thor* happen to instill a little purpose, hope, and pride in our audiences well, hey, who's complaining?



2022

Alan Zelenetz is still an East Coast-based writer and educator.

P.S. He still doesn't know the ridiculous from the sublime.

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TM

THE
MIGHTY

THOR

TM



A. KUPPERBERG
AND
GOLETTA

SIF FIGHTS FOR
EARTH AGAINST THE
HIGH-TECH HAVOC
OF **MEGATAK!**

When DR. DONALD BLAKE strikes his wooden walking-stick upon the ground, it becomes the mystic hammer MJOLNIR—and the lame physician is transformed into the Norse God of Thunder, Master of the Storm, Lord of the Living Lightning—and heir to the throne of eternal Asgard...

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**

DOUG MOENCH
SCRIPTER

ALAN KUPPERBERG
PENCILER

VINCE COLLETTA
INKER

JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER

GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

AN OBSOLETE WAREHOUSE AT THE STARK INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX ON LONG ISLAND, WHERE GODS HAVE RECENTLY TRIUMPHED-- AND NOW FEAST ON THE FRUITS OF VICTORY...

VIOLENCE IN VIDEO

AHHH... AS SUCCULENT AS THE GOLDEN APPLES OF IMMORTALITY MAY BE, METHINKS I'VE DEVoured ENOUGH TO WARRANT A SWIFT RETURN TO INFANCY.

YAWWWN

AYE, VAST VOLSTAGG--THINE APPETITE WOULD DO THREE GODS PROUD.

AND NOW THAT WE'VE SO ZEALOUSLY ASSURED OUR YOUTH AND IMMORTALITY, MAYHAP 'TIS TIME FOR US TO DEPART MIDGARD AND RETURN TO OUR PROPER HOME...

AT GOLDEN-HAIRED THOR'S SIDE, THE GODDESS SIF FLINCHES PERCEPTIVELY...

RETURN TO ASGARD, ALL-FATHER ODIN?
NOW--? JUST WHEN I WAS BEGINNING
TO APPRECIATE THIS LOWER REALM?

AYE, WHY
NOT REMAIN A
WHILE--AT LEAST
US WARRIORS
THREE? WHAT SAY
YOU, GRIM
HOGUN?

I SAY ONE
PLACE IS MUCH
LIKE ANY OTHER
TO ONE SUCH AS
ME, FANDRAL.

I HAVE NO
OBJECTIONS,
BUT 'TIS THOR
WHO--

AND I SAY THEE
MAY-- NOT SO
SWIFTLY ON THE
HEELS OF MY TROU-
BLES WITH RIMTHUR-
SAR'S MENAGERIE!
UNLESS A GOD BE
PREPARED TO SUBMERGE
HIMSELF IN MORTAL
FORM AS THE OCCASION
DEMANDS--

ENOW! LET
THE DISPUTE BE
ENDED! ALL THE
GODS SHALL RETURN
TO ASGARD--SAVE
HIM WHO HATH
CHOSEN TO RE-
SIDE HERE!

-- MIDGARD IS NO
PLACE FOR SUCH AS
THEE!

HMPH! 'TIS CLEAR WE'RE NOT
WANTED HERE...

AYE--MAYHAP WE'RE
NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO
SHARE HIS PRIVILEGE...

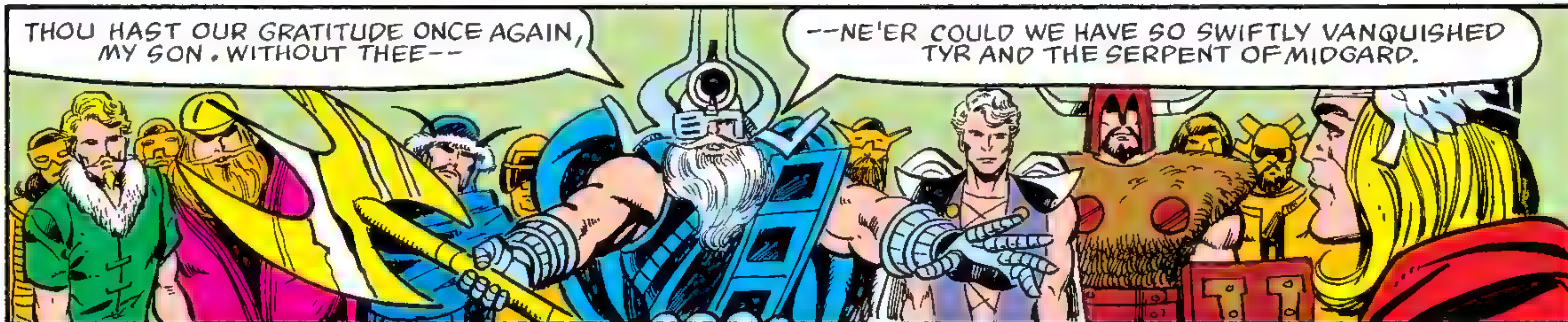
AH, WELL, IF THOR
IS BENT ON PROTECTING
US FROM THE SUPREME
HAZARDS OF THIS
REALM--

'TIS NOT A MATTER OF PROTECTION
OR PRIVILEGE! TRUST ME-- NO
ASGARDIAN BORN
WOULD BE FULLY
CONTENT HERE.

PERHAPS NOT--BUT
EVERY ONCE IN A
WHILE, IT SEEMS
ONE MUST TRY...

THEN 'TIS
SETTLED--WE
STAY!

ALONE AMONG
US ALL, ONLY MY SON
THOR HATH DEMONSTRATED
THE AFFINITY WITH MOR-
TALS NECESSARY TO LIVE
IN THIS LOWER
REALM.



THOU HAST OUR GRATITUDE ONCE AGAIN,
MY SON, WITHOUT THEE--

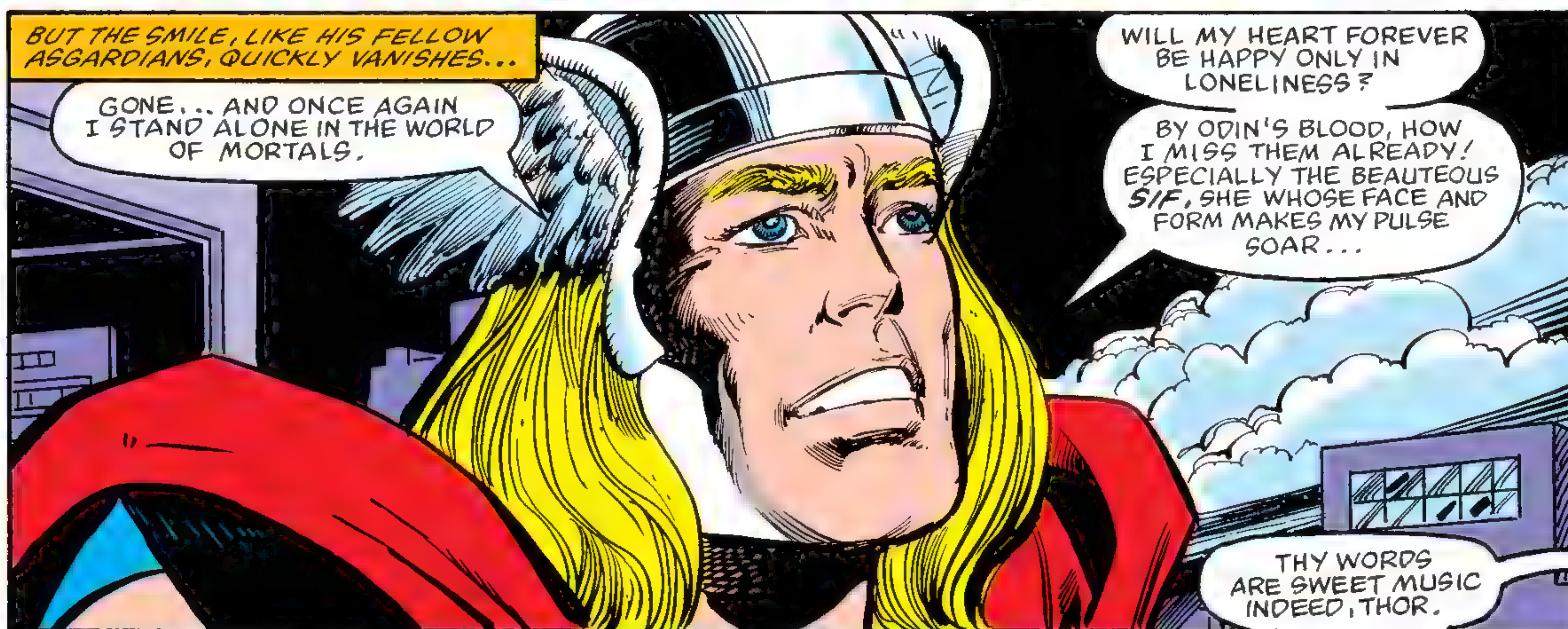
--NE'ER COULD WE HAVE SO SWIFTLY VANQUISHED
TYR AND THE SERPENT OF MIDGARD.



AND NOW, FAITHFUL
ONES, GATHER ROUND!
LET MY POWER, CHanneled
THROUGH THE SPEAR
GUNGNIR, ENCOMPASS
THEE--

--AND TRANS-
PORT US ALL
ALONG THE PATH
OF BIFROST,
TO SHINING
ASGARD
BEYOND!

FARE THEE WELL,
MY FRIENDS!



BUT THE SMILE, LIKE HIS FELLOW
ASGARDIANS, QUICKLY VANISHES...

GONE... AND ONCE AGAIN
I STAND ALONE IN THE WORLD
OF MORTALS.

WILL MY HEART FOREVER
BE HAPPY ONLY IN
LONELINESS?

BY ODIN'S BLOOD, HOW
I MISS THEM ALREADY!
ESPECIALLY THE BEAUTEOUS
SIF, SHE WHOSE FACE AND
FORM MAKES MY PULSE
SOAR...

THY WORDS
ARE SWEET MUSIC
INDEED, THOR.



I FEARED THY LOVE WAS LOST TO
ME... BUT NOW I REJOICE IN MY
DECISION TO REMAIN HERE ON
MIDGARD-- WITH THEE.

SIF!
BUT--



I WILL BROOK
NO ARGUMENT,
MY LOVE...

SIF... NE'ER
COULD I FORGET
SUCH A VOW--
BUT I... I AM
SETTLED NOW,
HERE ON
MIDGARD...

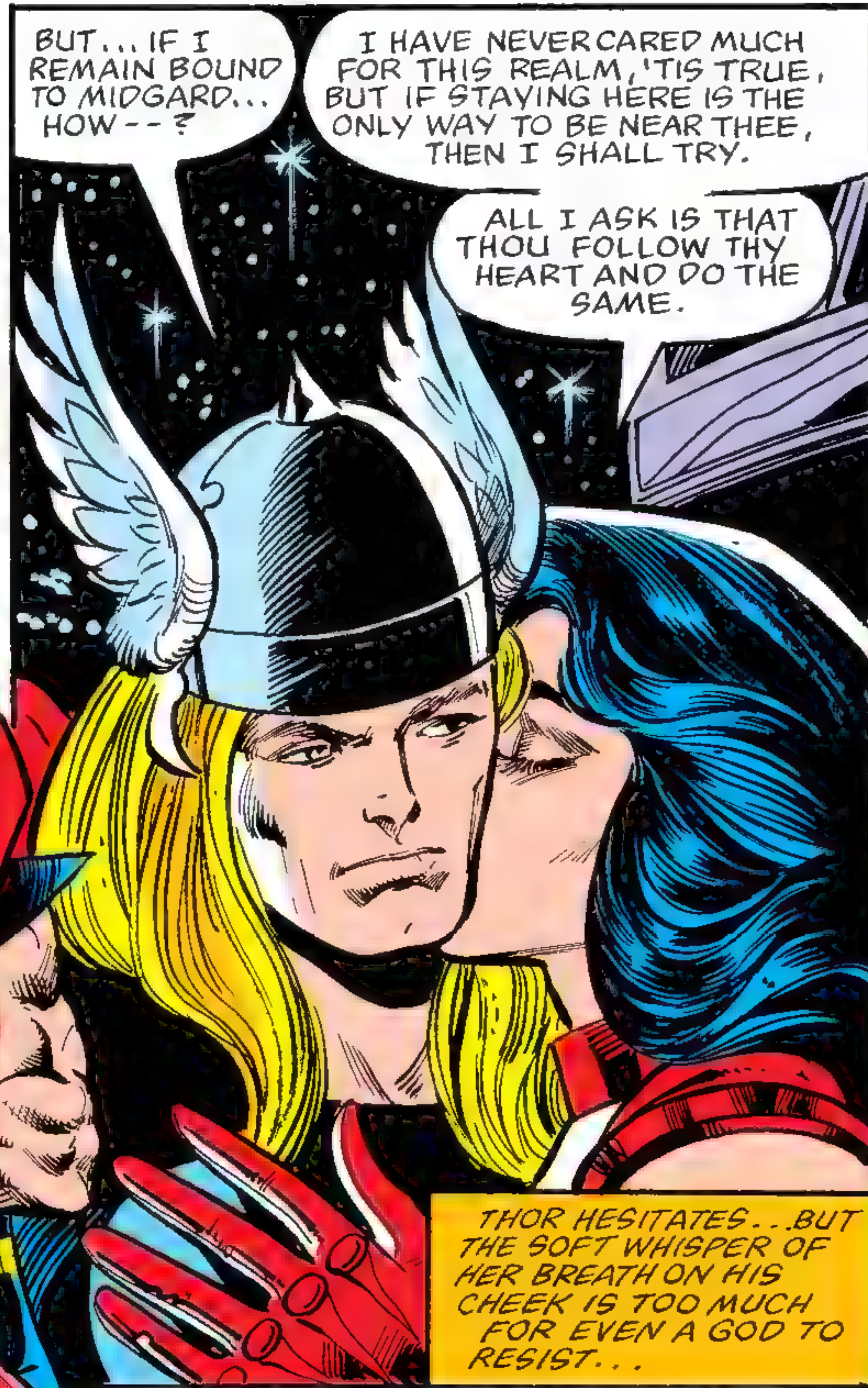
...OR HAST
THOU FORGOTTEN
OUR VOW TO
WED?



THEN... DOST THOU WISH TO **BREAK** THY VOW?

NAY! 'TIS NOT THAT...

AS I WELL KNEW-- E'EN **BEFORE** I HEARD THY SOLILOQUY, A LOVE SUCH AS OURS COULD NEVER BE SUNDERED.



BUT... IF I REMAIN BOUND TO MIDGARD... HOW--?

I HAVE NEVER CARED MUCH FOR THIS REALM, 'TIS TRUE, BUT IF STAYING HERE IS THE ONLY WAY TO BE NEAR THEE, THEN I SHALL TRY.

ALL I ASK IS THAT THOU FOLLOW THY HEART AND DO THE SAME.

THOR HESITATES... BUT THE SOFT WHISPER OF HER BREATH ON HIS CHEEK IS TOO MUCH FOR EVEN A GOD TO RESIST...

AND WHEN, A LONG TIME LATER, THE KISS IS BROKEN...

AYE-- I SEE NOW THAT I WAS A FOOL EVER TO DENY OUR LOVE.



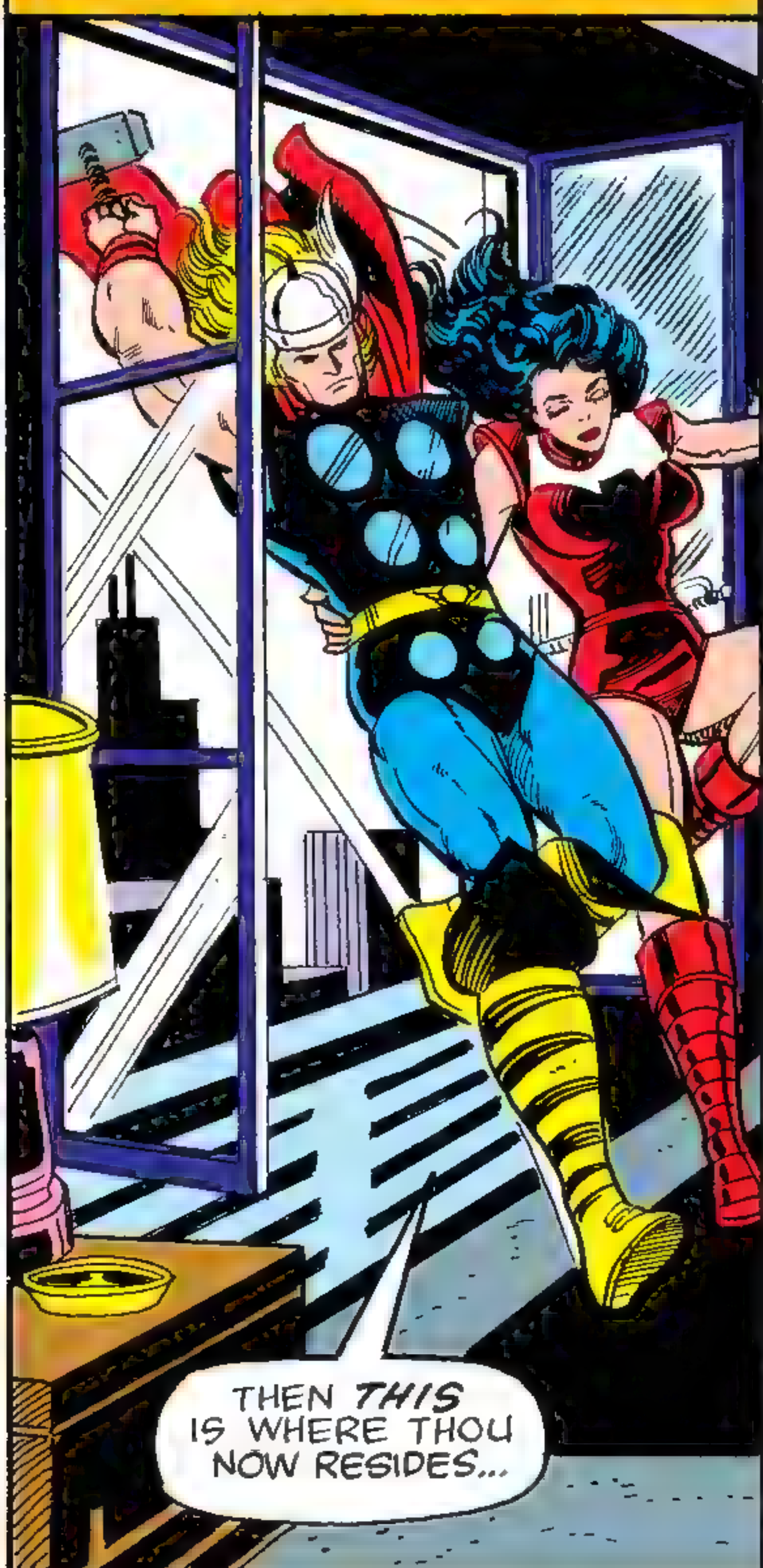
'T WILL BE DIFFICULT, STAYING HERE TOGETHER ON MIDGARD...



... BUT TO DO OUR LOVE THE JUSTICE IT DOETH DESERVE, WE CAN ONLY TRY WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH AND RESOLVE.

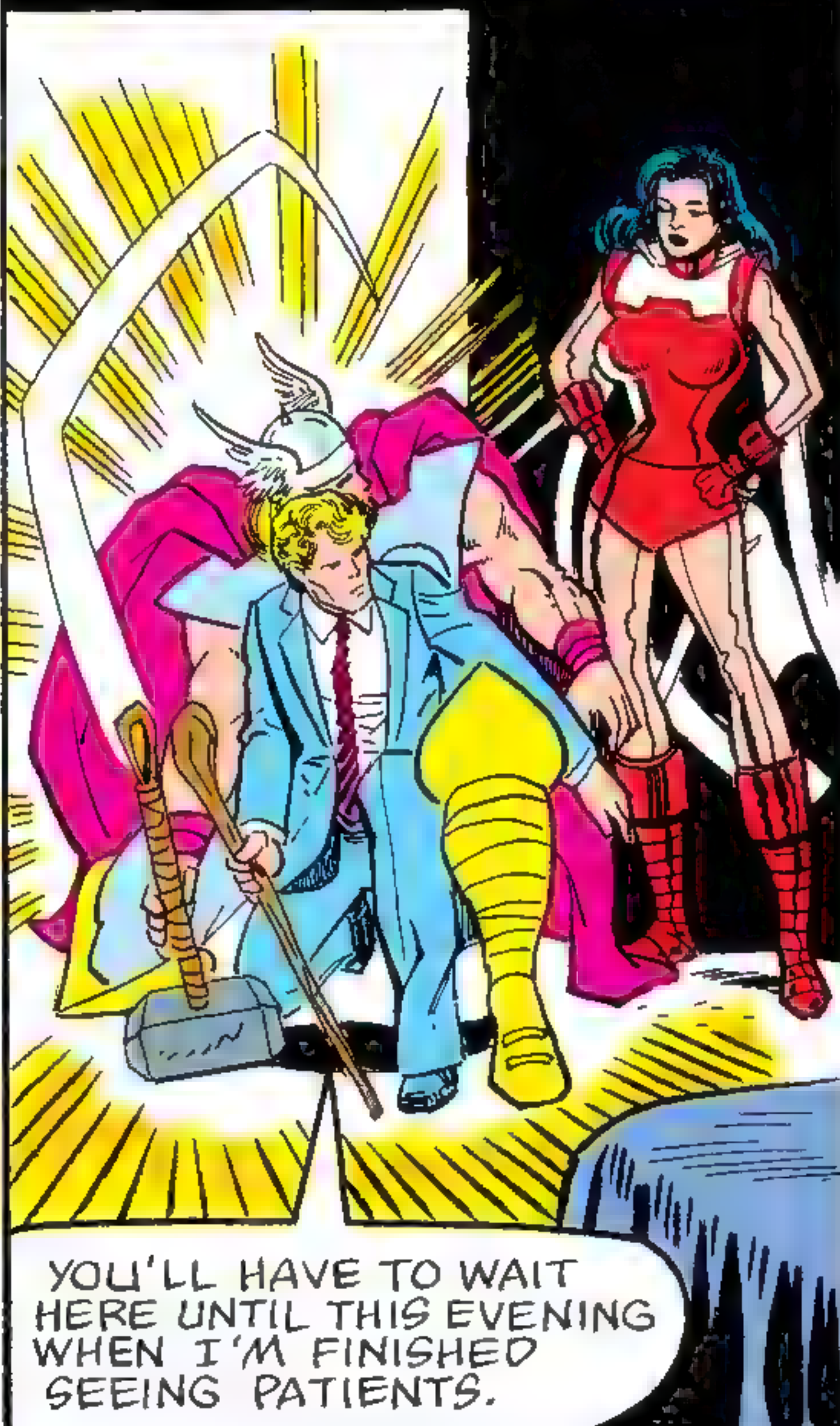
THEN, GATHERING SIF IN HIS ARM, HE HURLS HIS URU HAMMER MJOLNIR AWAY FROM THE DAWNING SUN, TOWARD CHICAGO...

SOON, IN THE MICHIGAN AVENUE APARTMENT LEASED BY THE MORTAL DR. DONALD BLAKE...



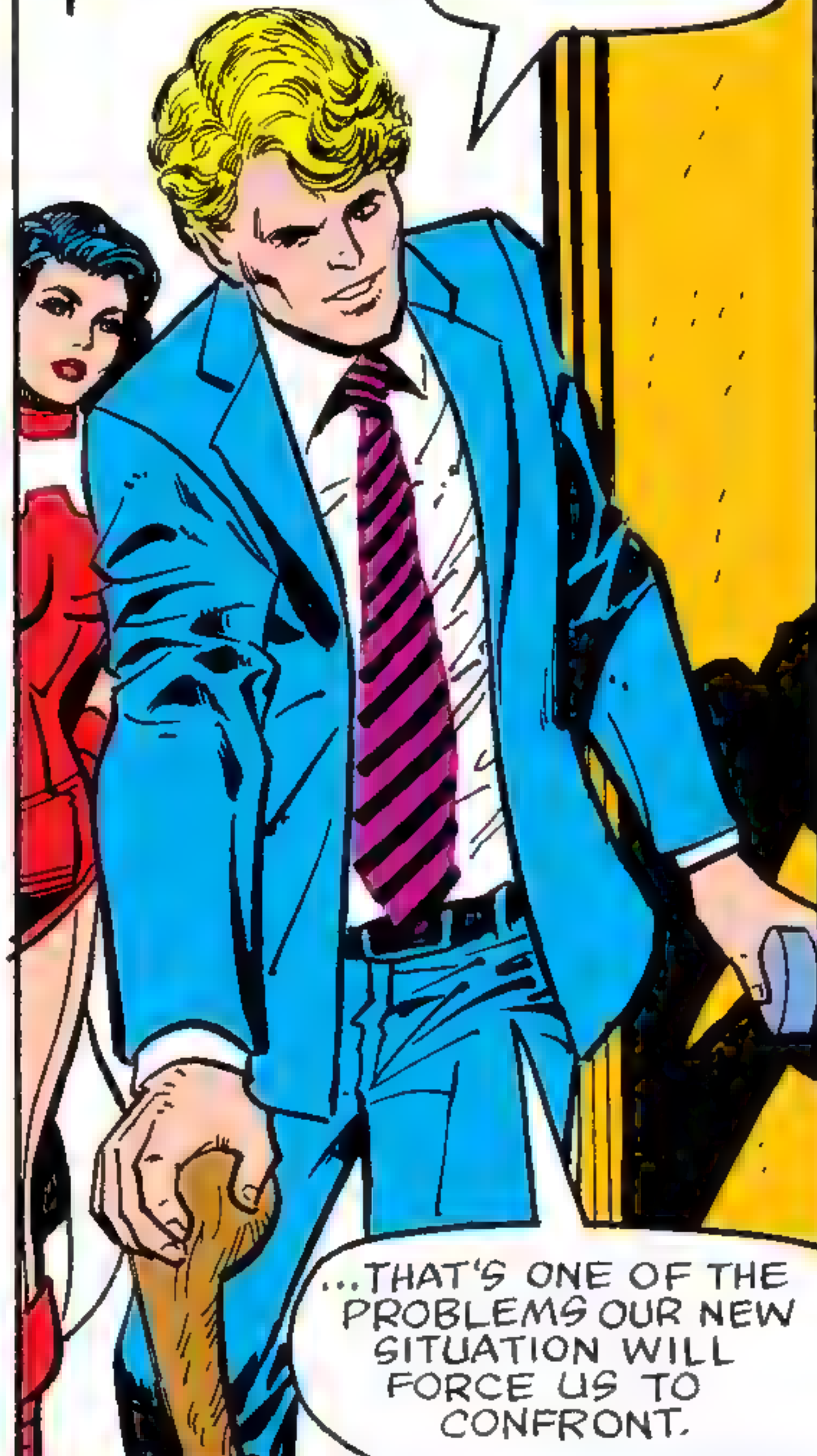
AYE, SIF, BUT I MUST QUICKLY GO TO THE ADJOINING OFFICES-- WHERE I AM NEEDED AS THE MORTAL DONALD BLAKE.

A TAP OF THE ENCHANTED HAMMER--AND WHERE GOD HAD KNELT, MORTAL NOW RISES.

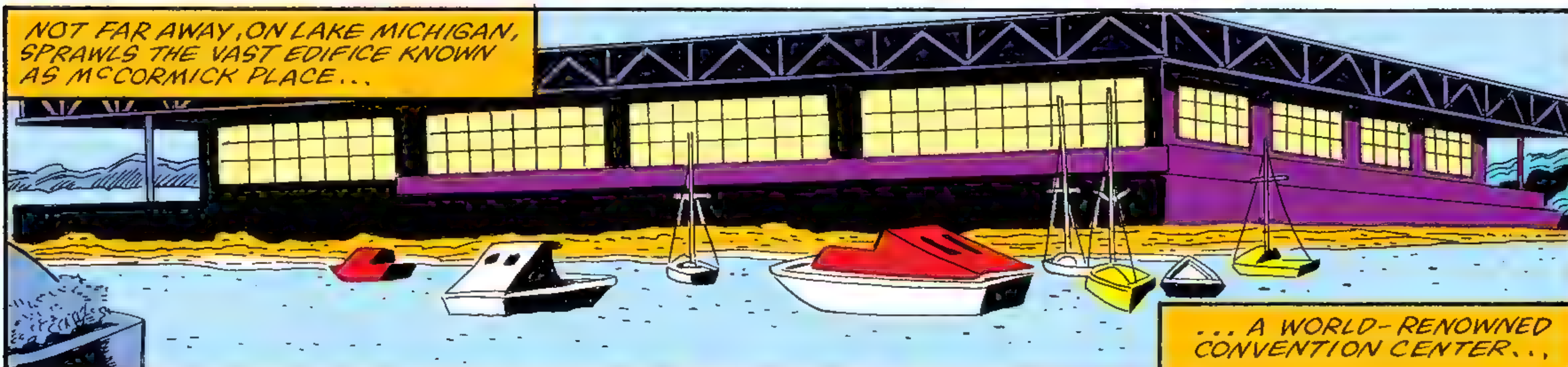


BUT... WHAT SHALL I DO IN SUCH SMALL CONFINES-- ALL DAY LONG?

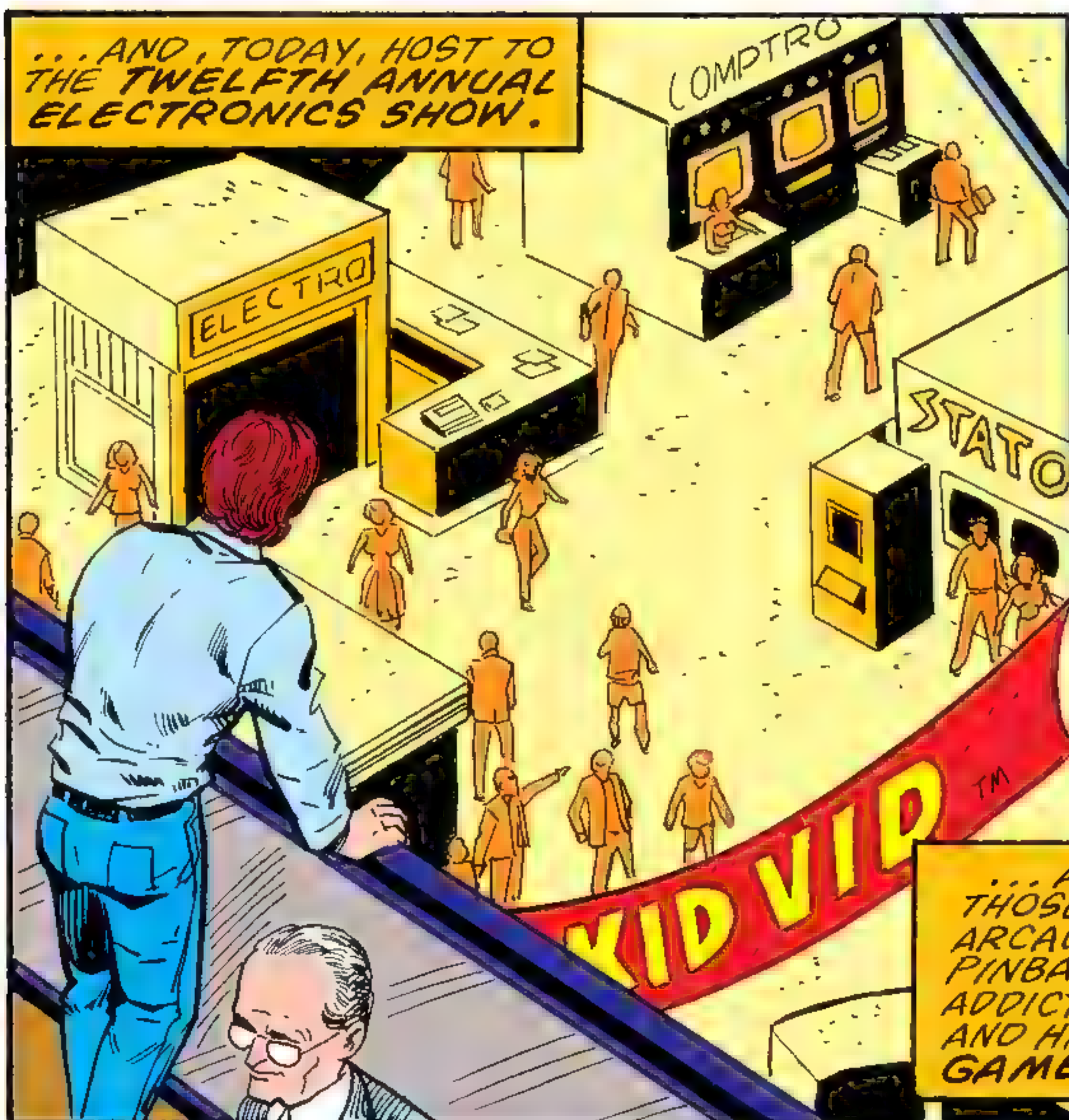
I REALLY DON'T KNOW, SIF...



NOT FAR AWAY, ON LAKE MICHIGAN, SPRAWLS THE VAST EDIFICE KNOWN AS MCCORMICK PLACE...



... AND, TODAY, HOST TO THE TWELFTH ANNUAL ELECTRONICS SHOW.



HERE TO PROUDLY DISPLAY THEIR ULTRA-NEW AND HYPER-SOPHISTICATED WARES ARE MANUFACTURERS OF COMPUTERS, AUDIO AND VIDEO COMPONENTS, ALARM SYSTEMS, HOSPITAL MONITORING DEVICES, COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT...

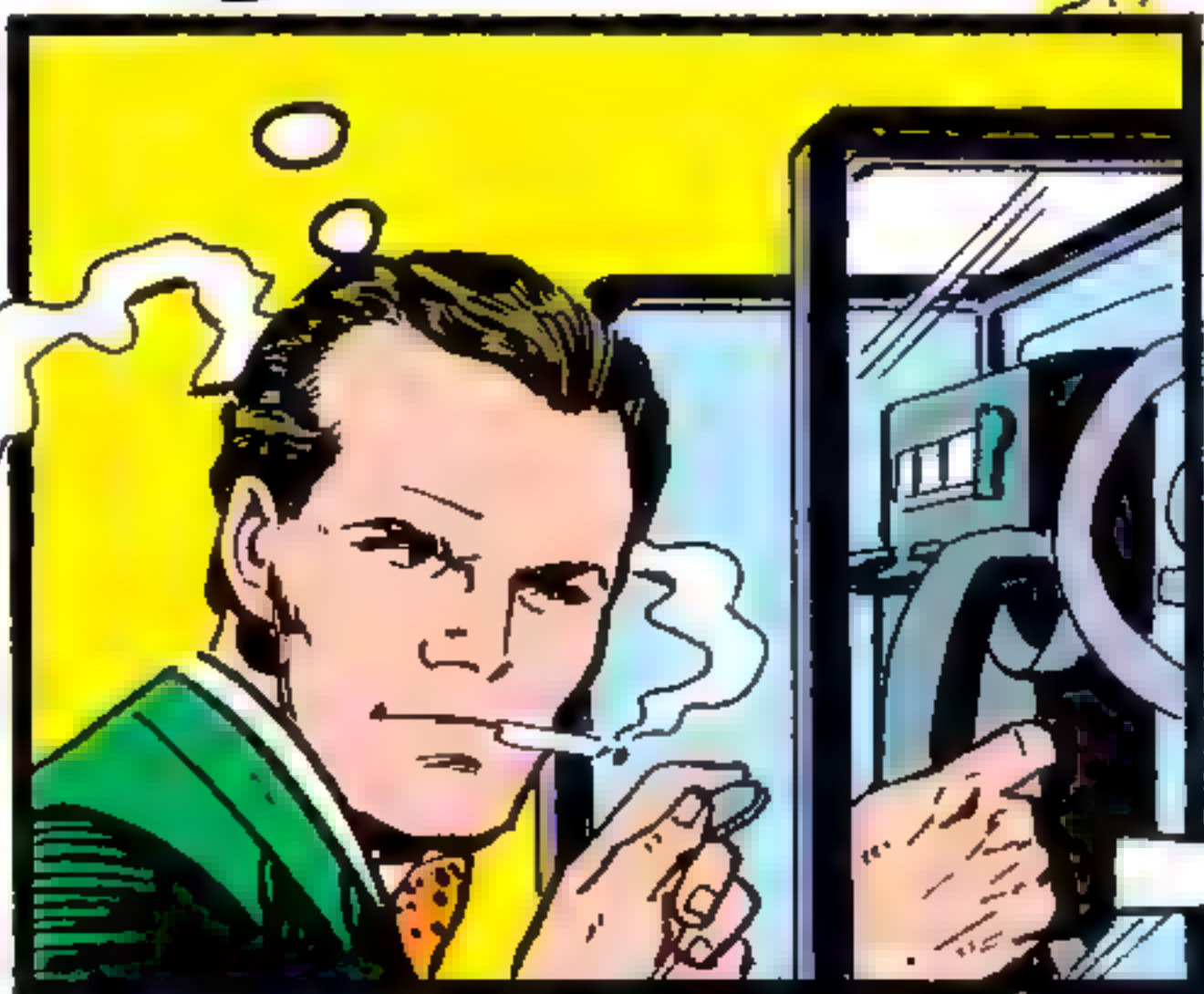
... AND, LET US NOT FORGET, THOSE NEW DARLINGS OF THE ARCADES, THOSE SLAYERS OF PINBALL MACHINES, THOSE ADDICTIVE ANTIDOTES TO OZZIE AND HARRIET RERUNS-- VIDEO GAMES.

VIDEO GAMES-- WHERE THE REAL MONEY IS...

THAT'S IT, ALL RIGHT-- **MEGATAK**-- AND THEY'VE MANAGED TO KEEP IT UNDER WRAPS ALMOST TO THE LAST MINUTE.

THIS IS GREGORY NETTLES. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE TOO LATE-- THEY'RE GOING TO DEMONSTRATE IT IN ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES. MAYBE THERE ARE SOME OTHER PROGRAMS HERE YOU'D LIKE ME TO... AH, OBTAIN?

WE WANT **MEGATAK**, NETTLES-- UNDERSTAND? **PAC-MAN** GROSSED IN EXCESS OF THREE BILLION DOLLARS LAST YEAR-- AND **MEGATAK** STANDS TO MAKE THAT LOOK LIKE PEANUTS!



THE TECHNOLOGY OF THAT GAME IS TWO GENERATIONS AHEAD OF EVERYTHING ELSE ON THE MARKET. WE WANT IT-- AND WE WANT IT NOW!

GATHER ROUND, FOLKS! IT WON'T BE LONG NOW-- LESS THAN A HALF-HOUR UNTIL THE GREATEST VIDEO EXPERIENCE EVER SEEN BY HUMAN EYES!

megataK
COUNTDOWN:
T MINUS 23
UNTIL THE MIN
WORLD PREMIERE
OF DEMONSTRATION
OF **MEGATAK**,
NOGARI CORP.'S
DAZZLING NEW GAME
OF ADVANCED FUTURE
WARFARE

BUT I TELL YOU, THEY'RE GOING TO SHOW IT IN TWENTY MINUTES.

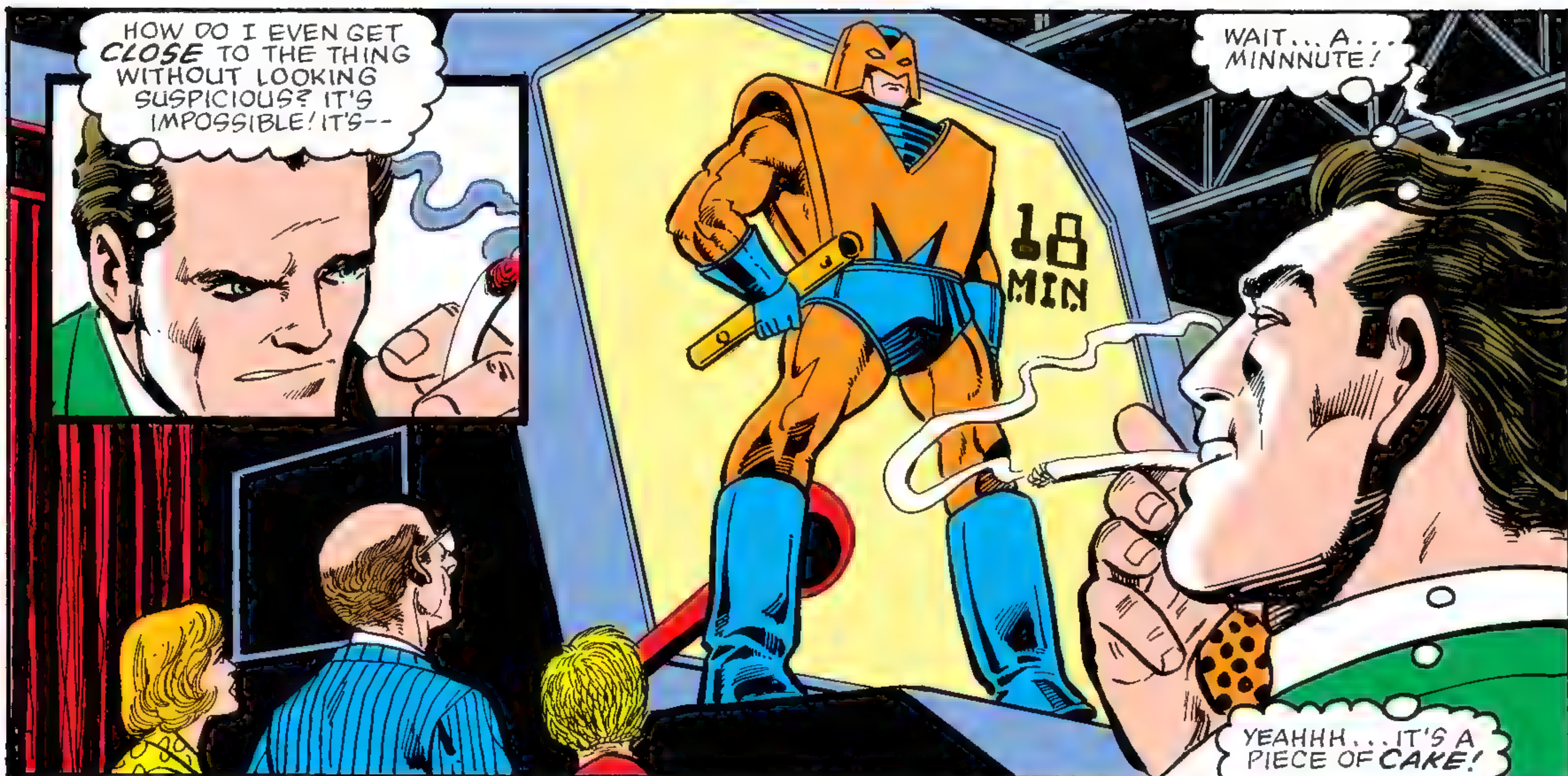
THEN YOU HAVE TWENTY MINUTES TO STEAL THE CRUCIAL CHIPS.

BECAUSE IF THEY DEMONSTRATE THAT GAME TO THE PUBLIC, IT'LL BE WORTHLESS TO US-- AND IF THAT HAPPENS, NETTLES, YOU GET **NOTHING**!

--OR YOU'RE FIRED!

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT YOU COULDN'T BUY OFF SOMEONE ON THE INSIDE. NOW YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO STEAL IT YOURSELF, NETTLES--

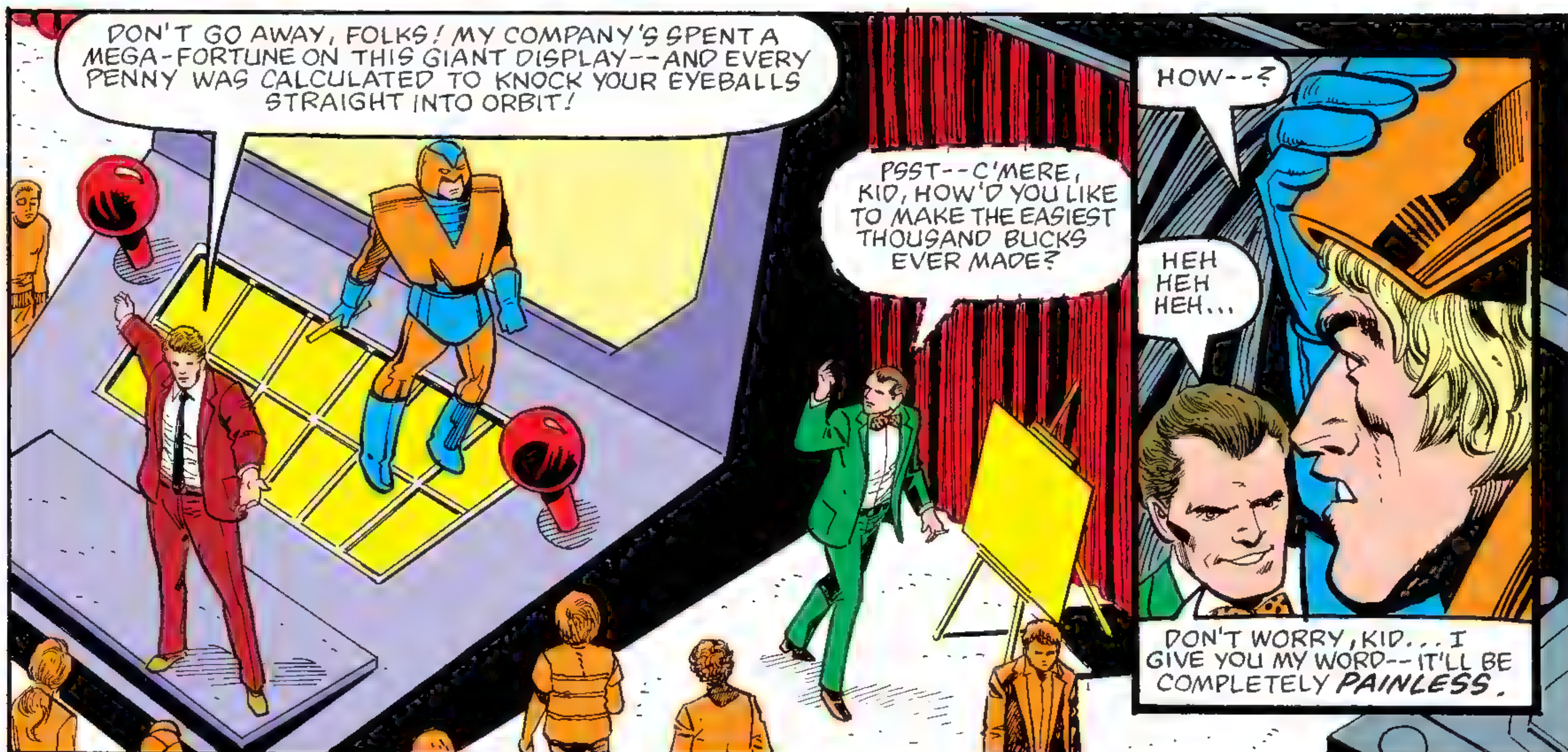
BUT I'VE FOLLOWED THIS THING FOR MONTHS! YOU CAN'T SHUT ME OUT NOW!



HOW DO I EVEN GET CLOSE TO THE THING WITHOUT LOOKING SUSPICIOUS? IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT'S--

WAIT... A... MINNNUTE!

YEAHHH... IT'S A PIECE OF CAKE!



DON'T GO AWAY, FOLKS! MY COMPANY'S SPENT A MEGA-FORTUNE ON THIS GIANT DISPLAY--AND EVERY PENNY WAS CALCULATED TO KNOCK YOUR EYEBALLS STRAIGHT INTO ORBIT!

PSST--C'MERE, KID, HOW'D YOU LIKE TO MAKE THE EASIEST THOUSAND BUCKS EVER MADE?

HOW--?

HEH HEH HEH...

DON'T WORRY, KID... I GIVE YOU MY WORD-- IT'LL BE COMPLETELY PAINLESS.



IN THE PAST HOUR ALONE, DONALD BLAKE'S MIND HAS RERUN THE SAME THOUGHTS SEVEN TIMES...

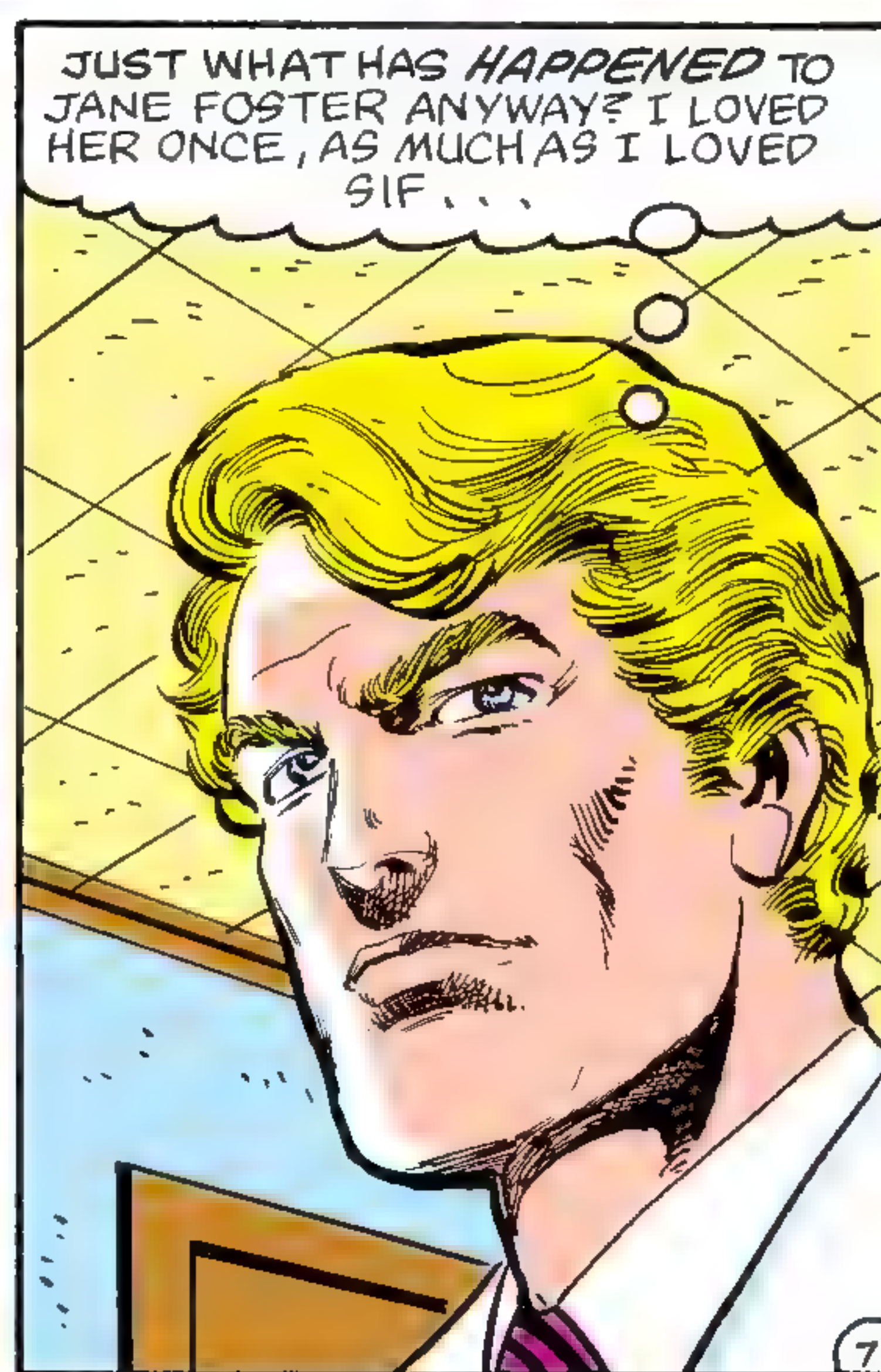
IT'S CRAZY-- WHAT EVER MADE ME THINK IT WOULD WORK? HOW WILL I EVEN EXPLAIN HER PRESENCE IN MY ROOMS?

I CAN'T HIDE HER FOREVER-- AN ASGARDIAN GODDESS WHO LOOKS LIKE...



WAIT A MINUTE! HOW DID SHE REMAIN IN HER GODLY FORM. I ALWAYS ASSUMED SHE WOULD REVERT TO BEING JANE FOSTER HERE ON EARTH...

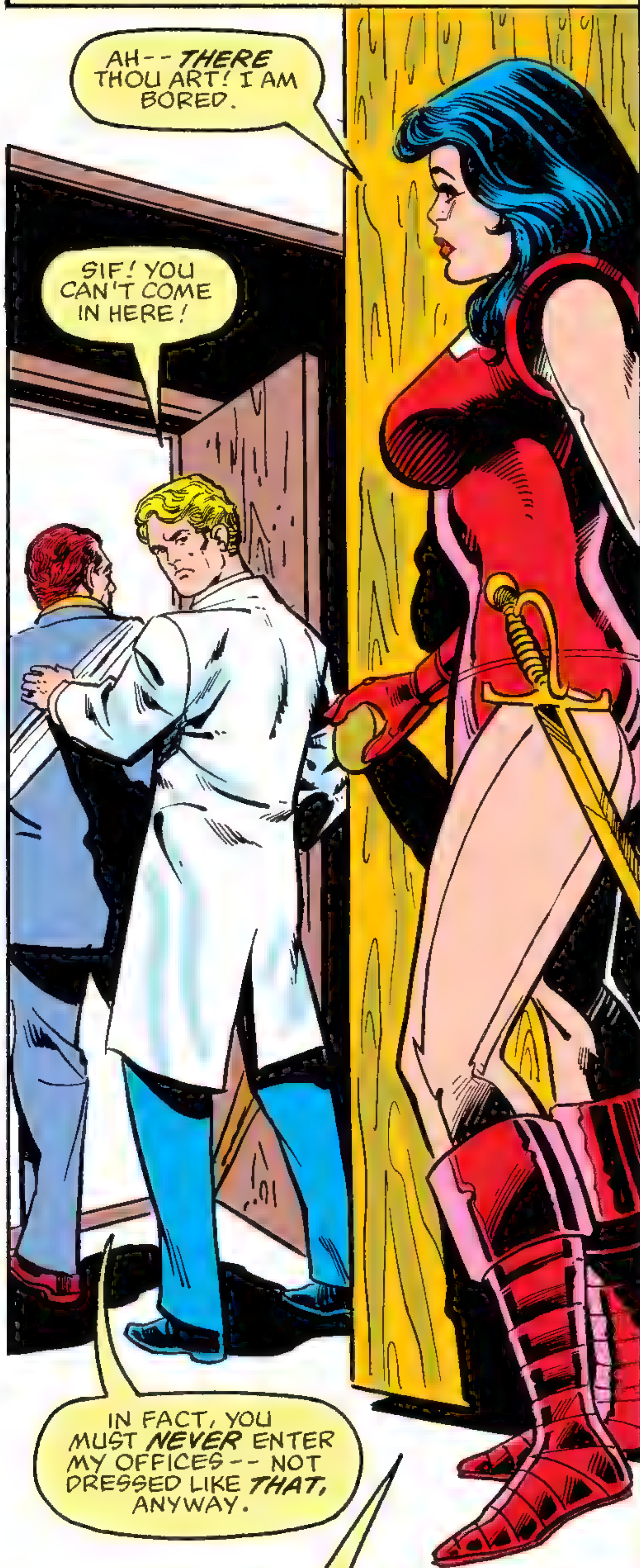
EVER SINCE THEIR FORMS WERE MAGICALLY MERGED, I THOUGHT SIF'S FORM DOMINATED IN ASSGARD. JANE'S HERE!



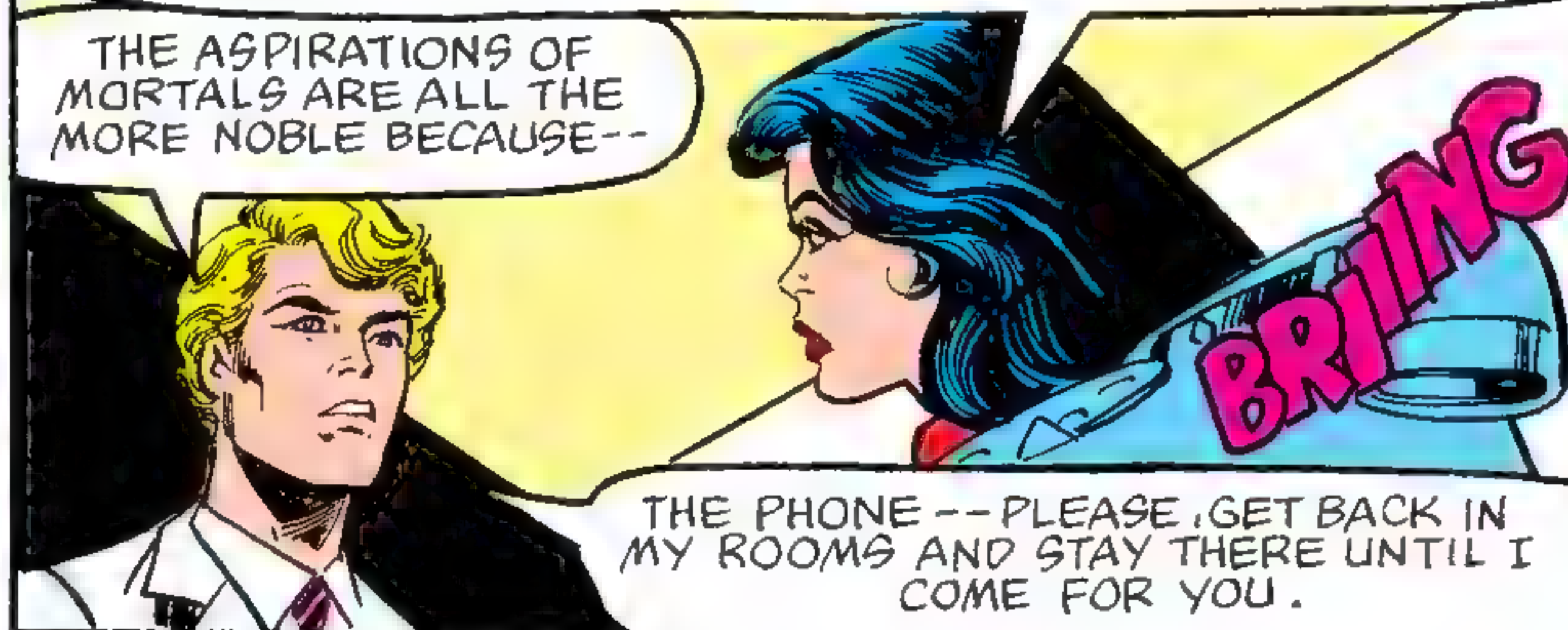
JUST WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO JANE FOSTER ANYWAY? I LOVED HER ONCE, AS MUCH AS I LOVED SIF...



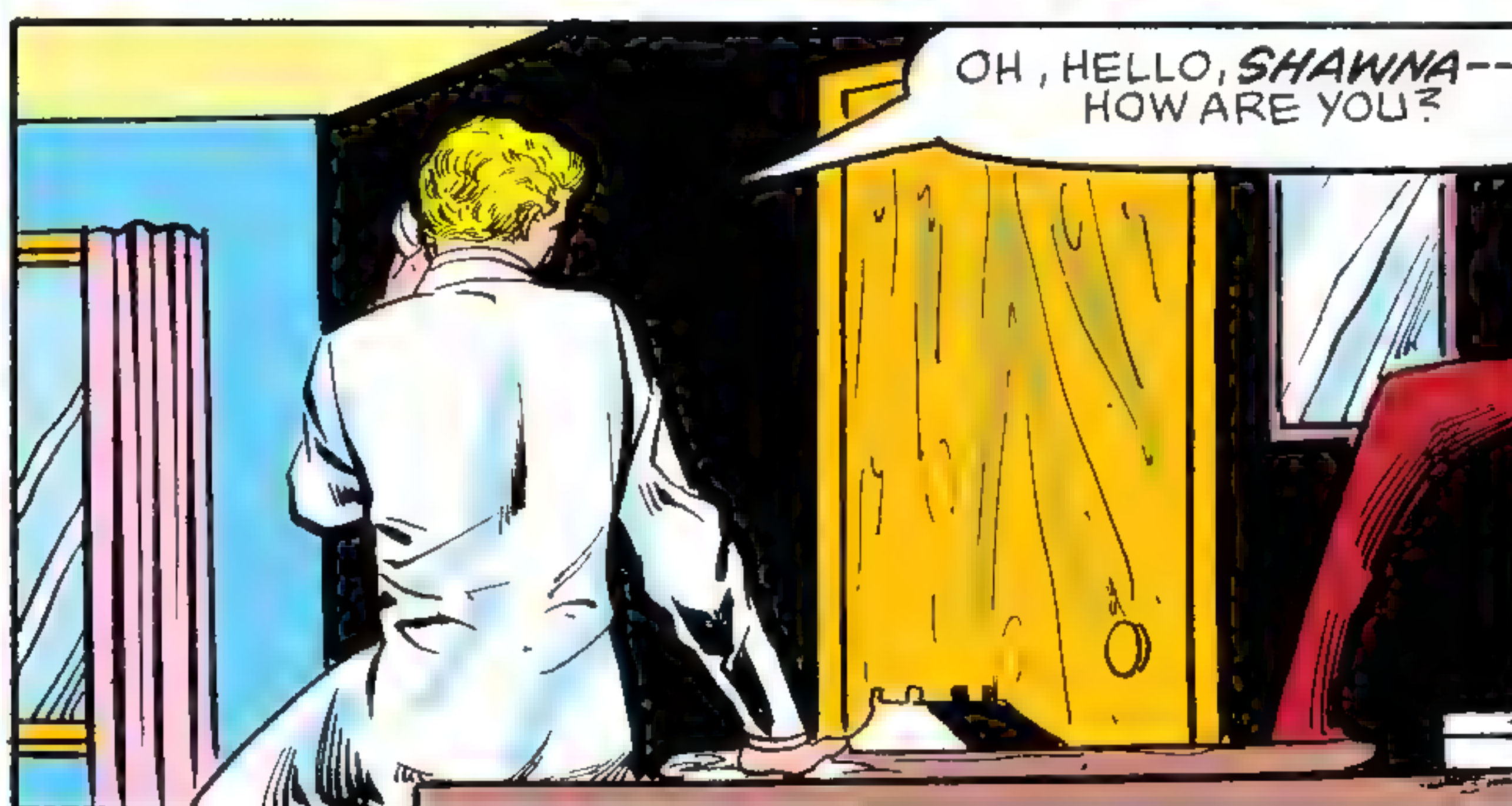
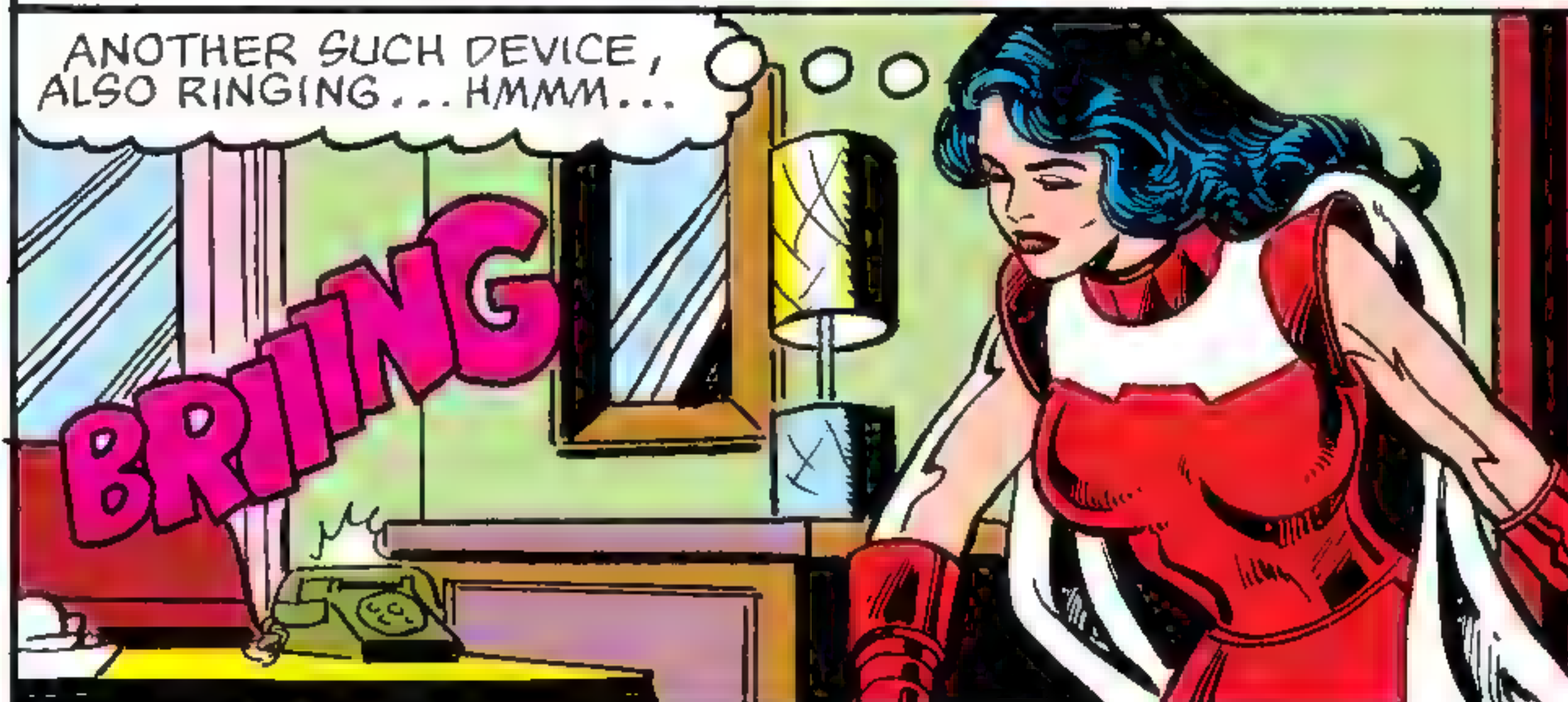
AND, AS BLAKE USHERS THE PATIENT FROM HIS OFFICE AMID EFFUSIVE APOLOGIES...

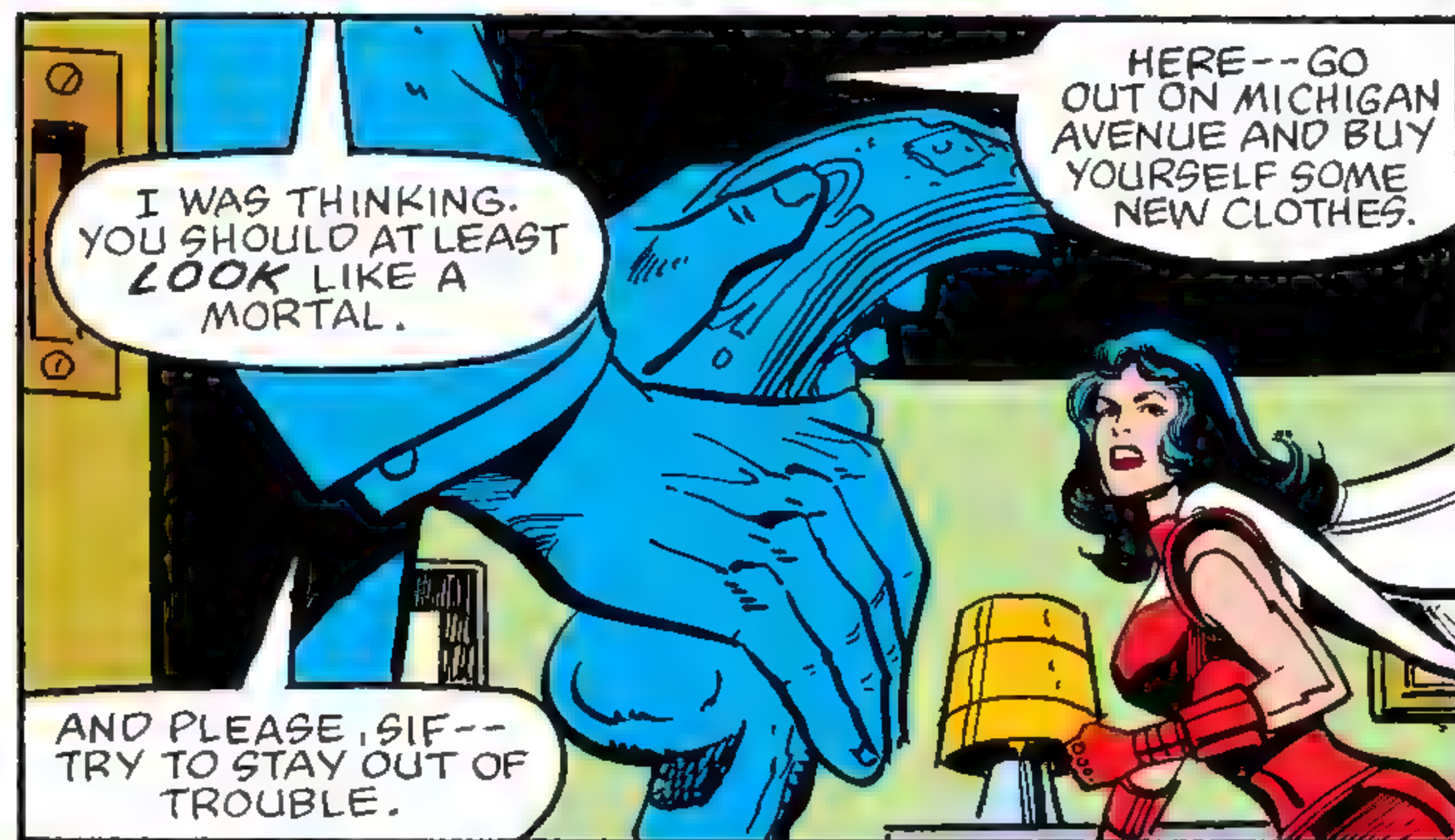
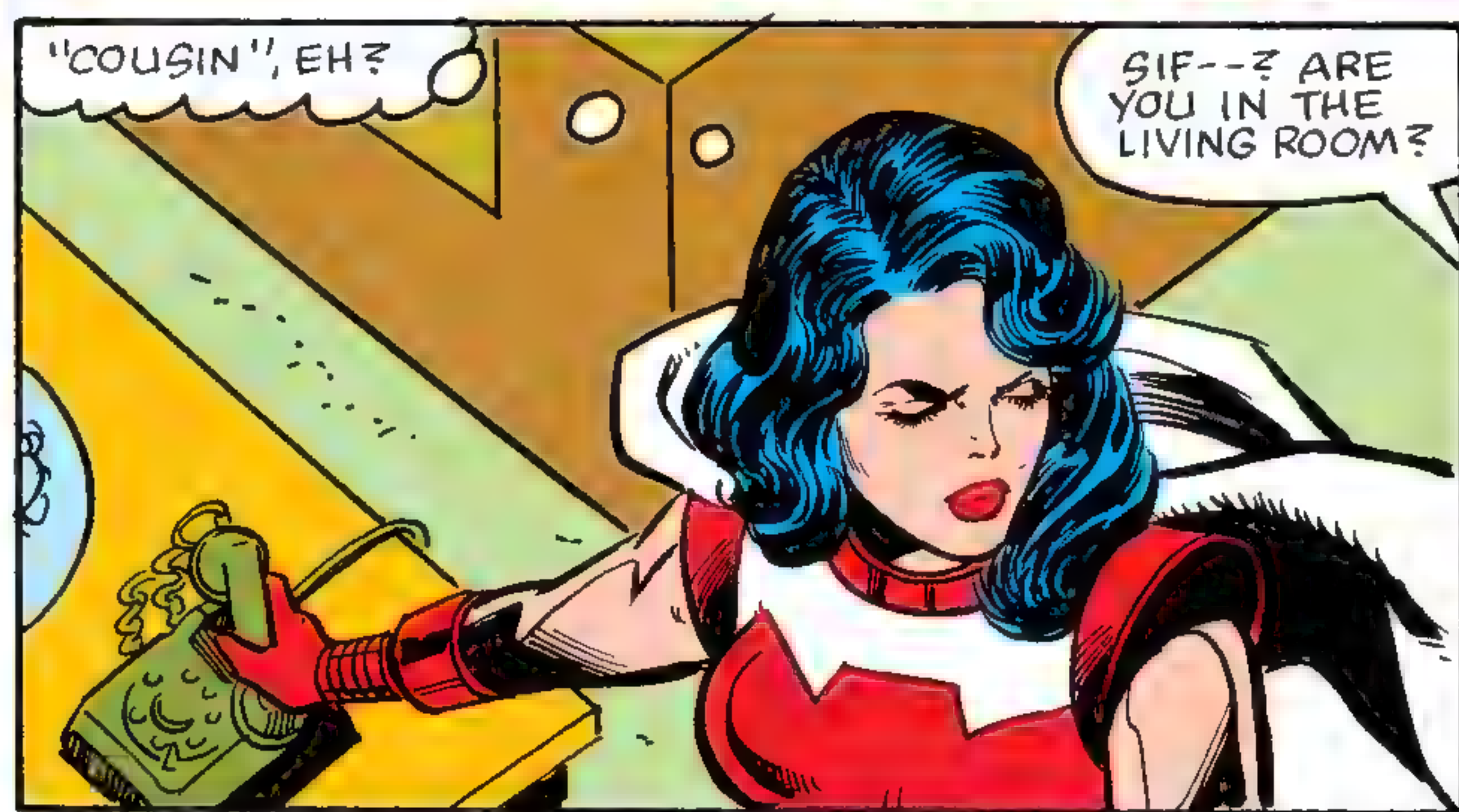


MUST I LOWER MYSELF TO POSING AS A MORTAL LIKE YOU? AND WHY DOST THOU DO IT? WHAT ATTRACTION CAN IT POSSIBLY HOLD? THOU ART THE GOD OF THUNDER--!



SIF OBEYS, STAMPING HER FEET THE WHOLE WAY, AND AS SHE ENTERS BLAKE'S LIVING ROOM...





OUTSIDE MCCORMICK PLACE...

...NINE-HUNDRED...
NINE-HUNDRED-
FIFTY...

...ONE-THOUSAND.

...GREGORY NETTLES STEPS FROM
THE SHADOWS, TRANSACTION
COMPLETED.

AND THOUGH HE IS SOME-
WHAT EMBARRASSED BY HIS
NEW ATTIRE, HE IS NEVER-
THELESS DESPERATE.

LOOKING ONCE RIGHT AND
TWICE LEFT, HE HEADS BACK
FOR THE ENTRANCE...

... AND STRAIGHT FOR THE BOOTHS
WHERE THE REAL MONEY IS.

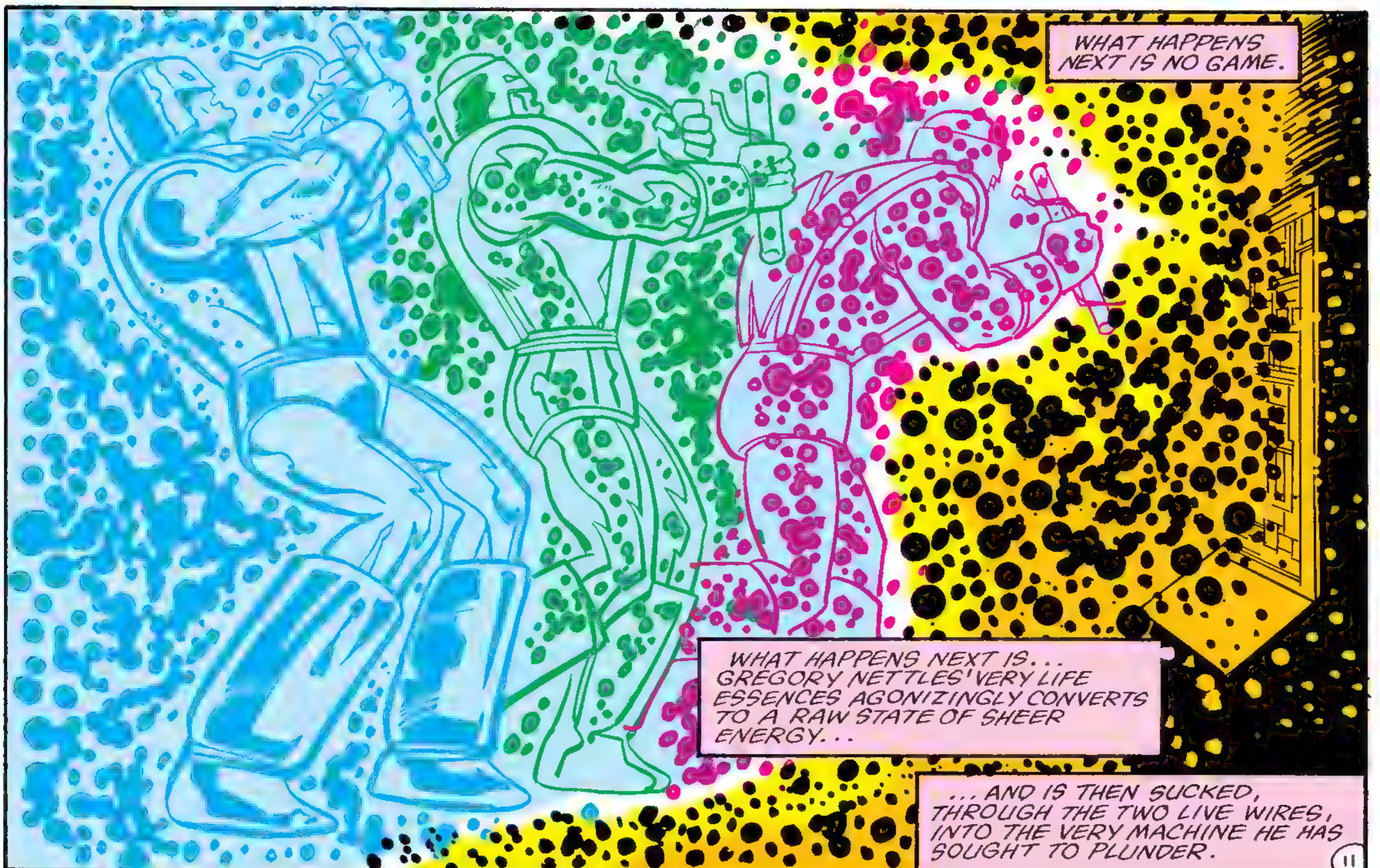
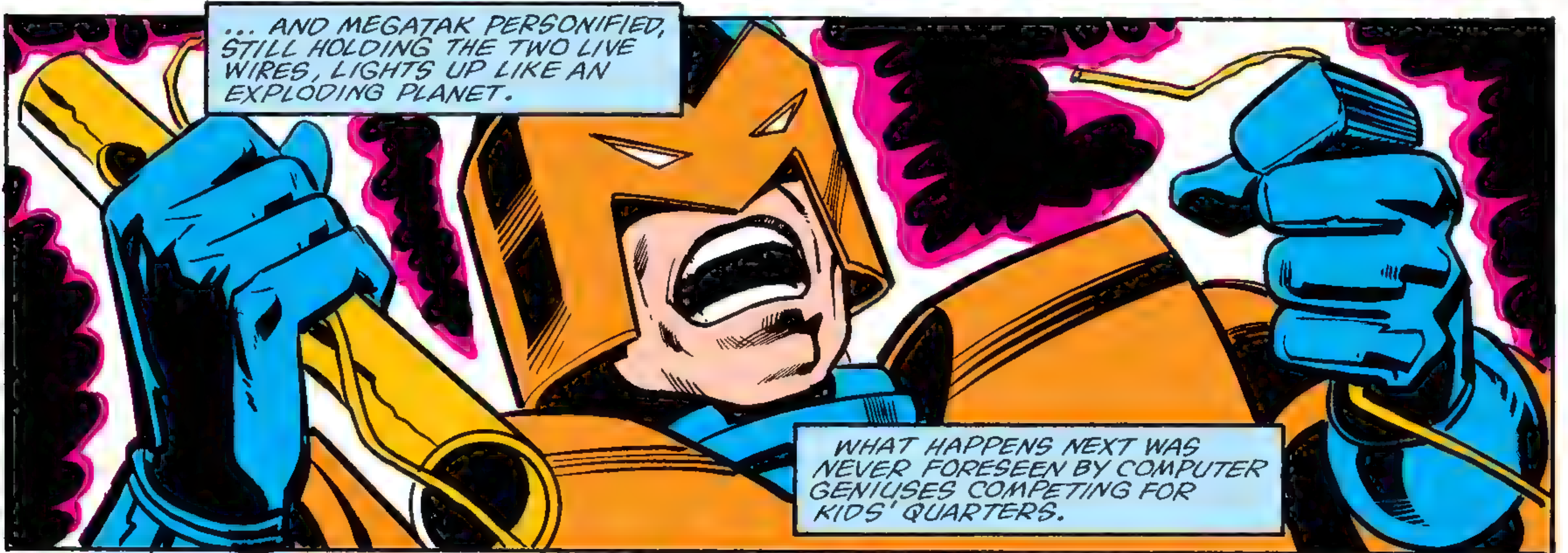
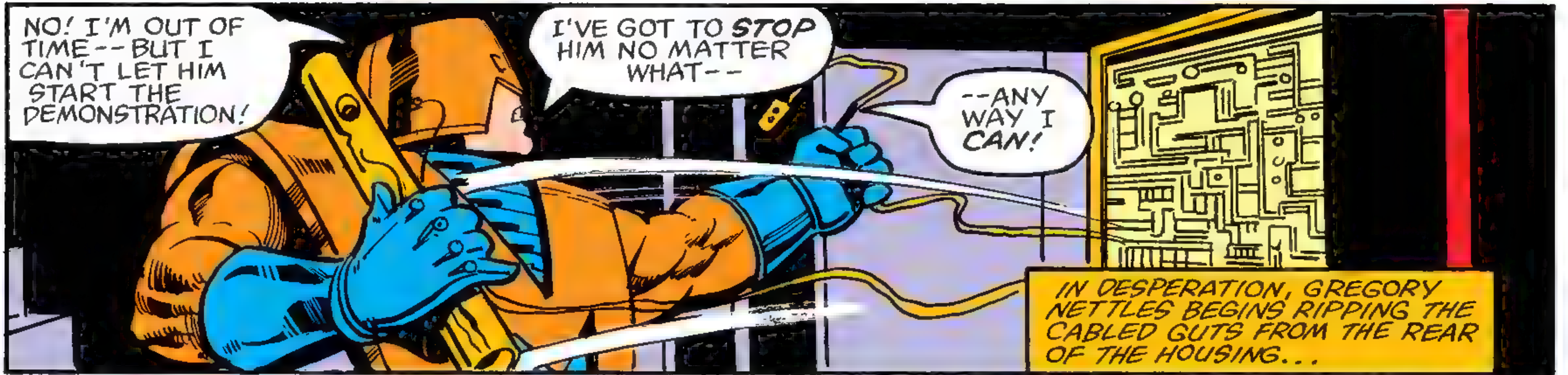
LESS THAN FIVE
MINUTES, FOLKS, UNTIL
THE WORLD PREMIERE
DEMONSTRATION OF
MEGATAK!

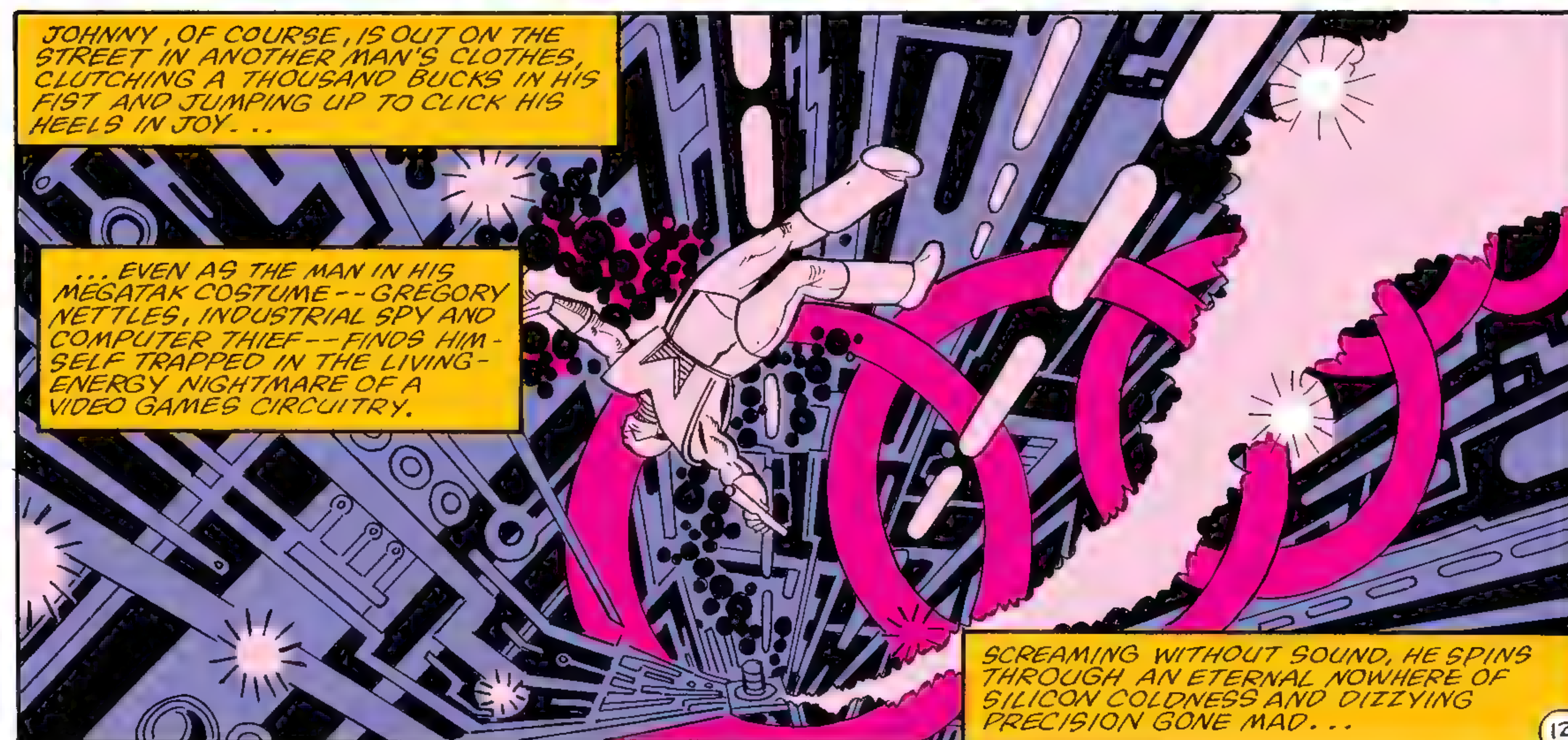
GOT TO WORK FAST--
OR KISS A GRAND RIGHT
DOWN THE TUBES!

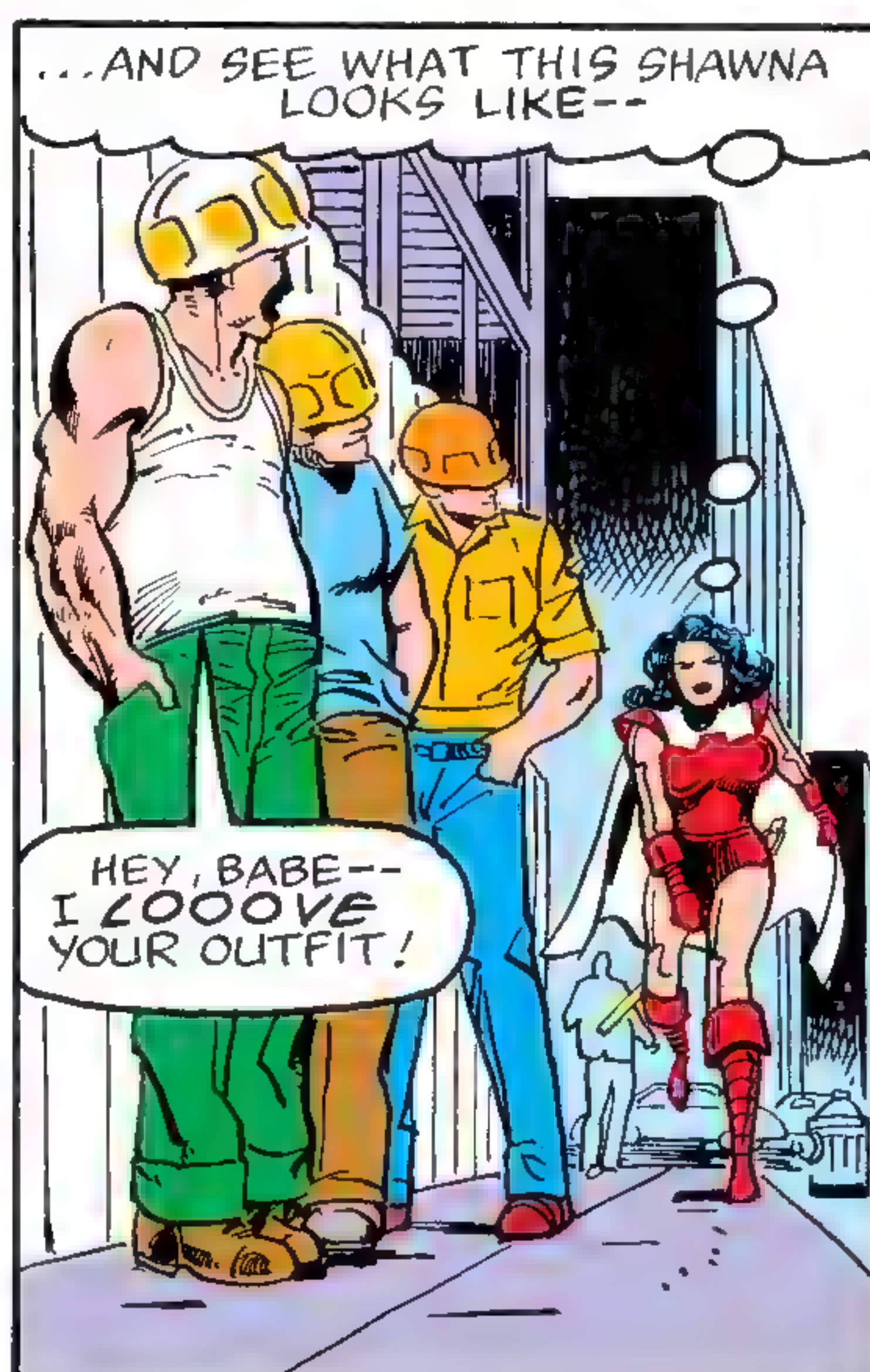
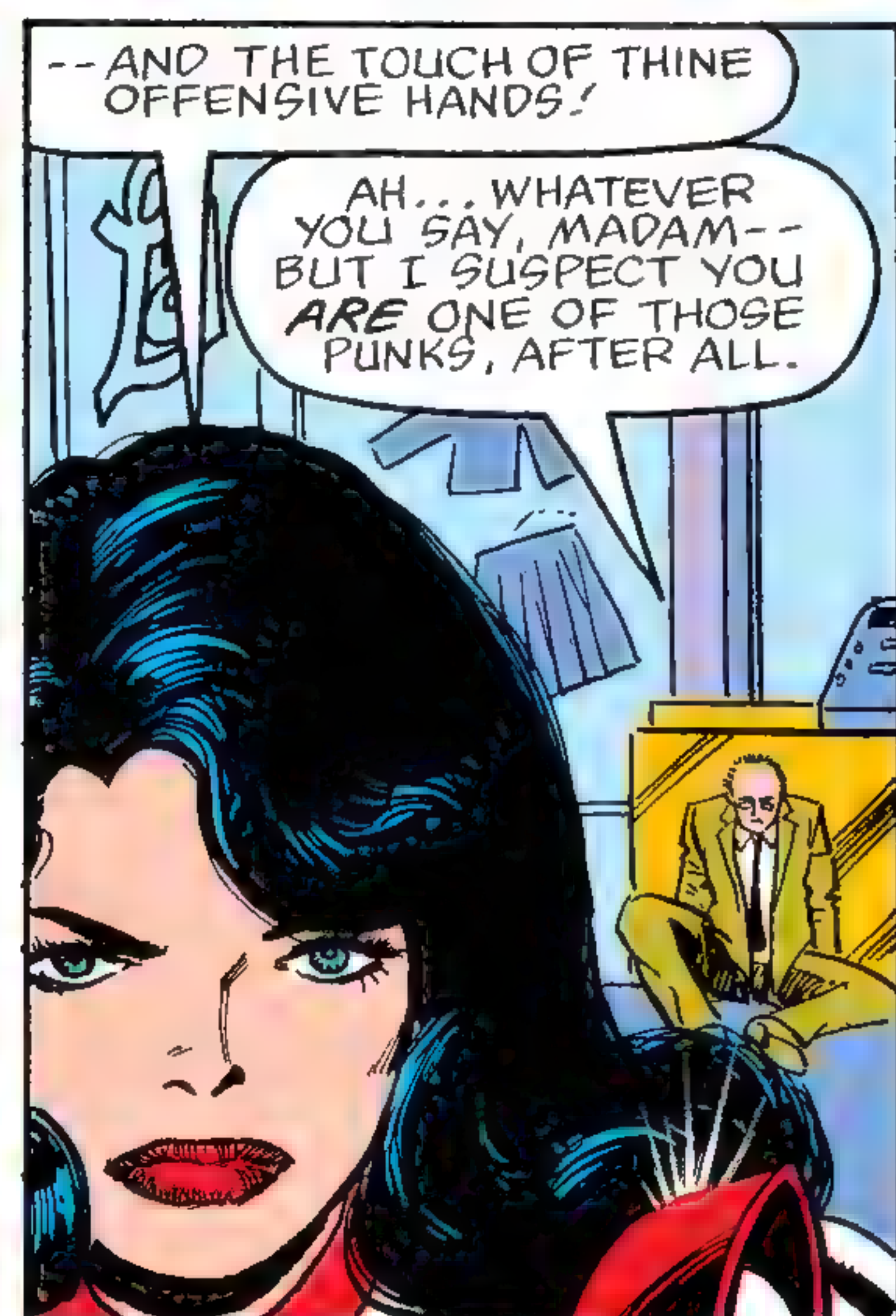
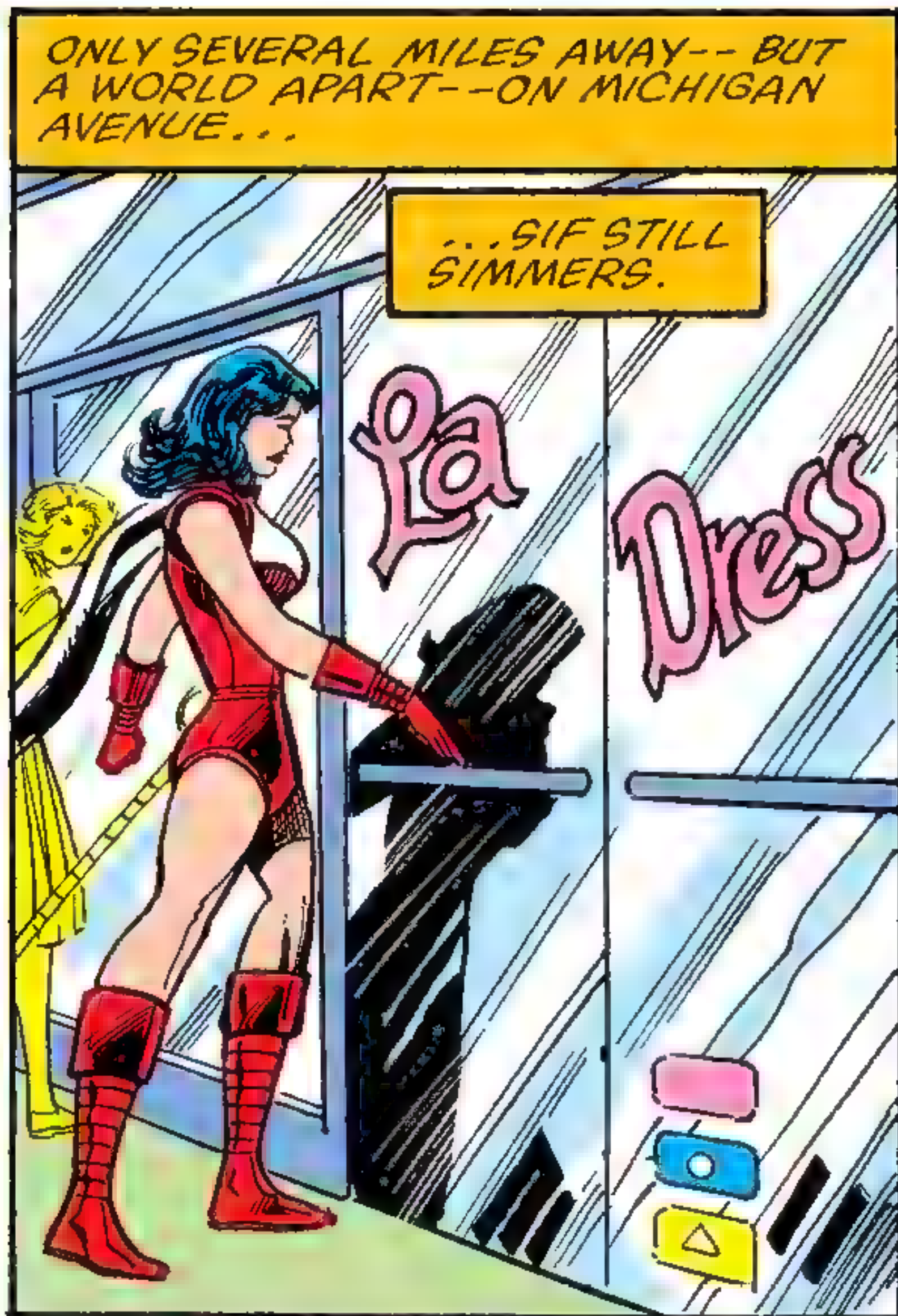
UNBELIEVABLE! THE TECHNOLOGY
OF THIS GAME *IS* REVOLUTIONARY!
IT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM
ALL PREVIOUS VIDEO GAME
CIRCUITRY...

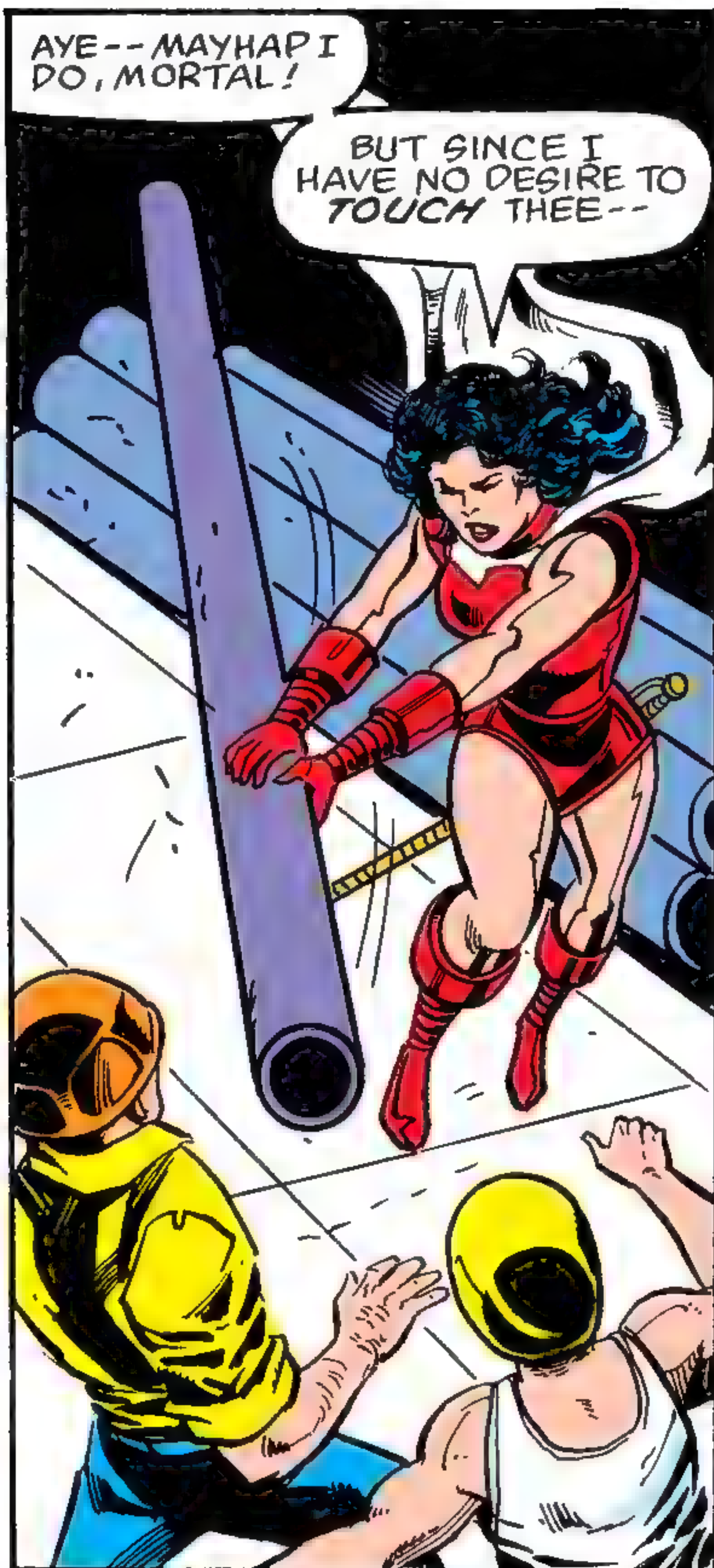
OKAY, FOLKS! GATHER ROUND--
THIS IS IT! TIME TO DEMONSTRATE
MEGATAK-- THE MOST ADVANCED
VIDEO GAME IN THE GALAXY!

... AND SO NEW THAT THEY HAVEN'T
EVEN FULLY MINIATURIZED IT YET.
BUT STILL, THE SILICON CHIPS
THEMSELVES SHOULD BE SMALL
ENOUGH... IF I COULD ONLY FIND THEM...



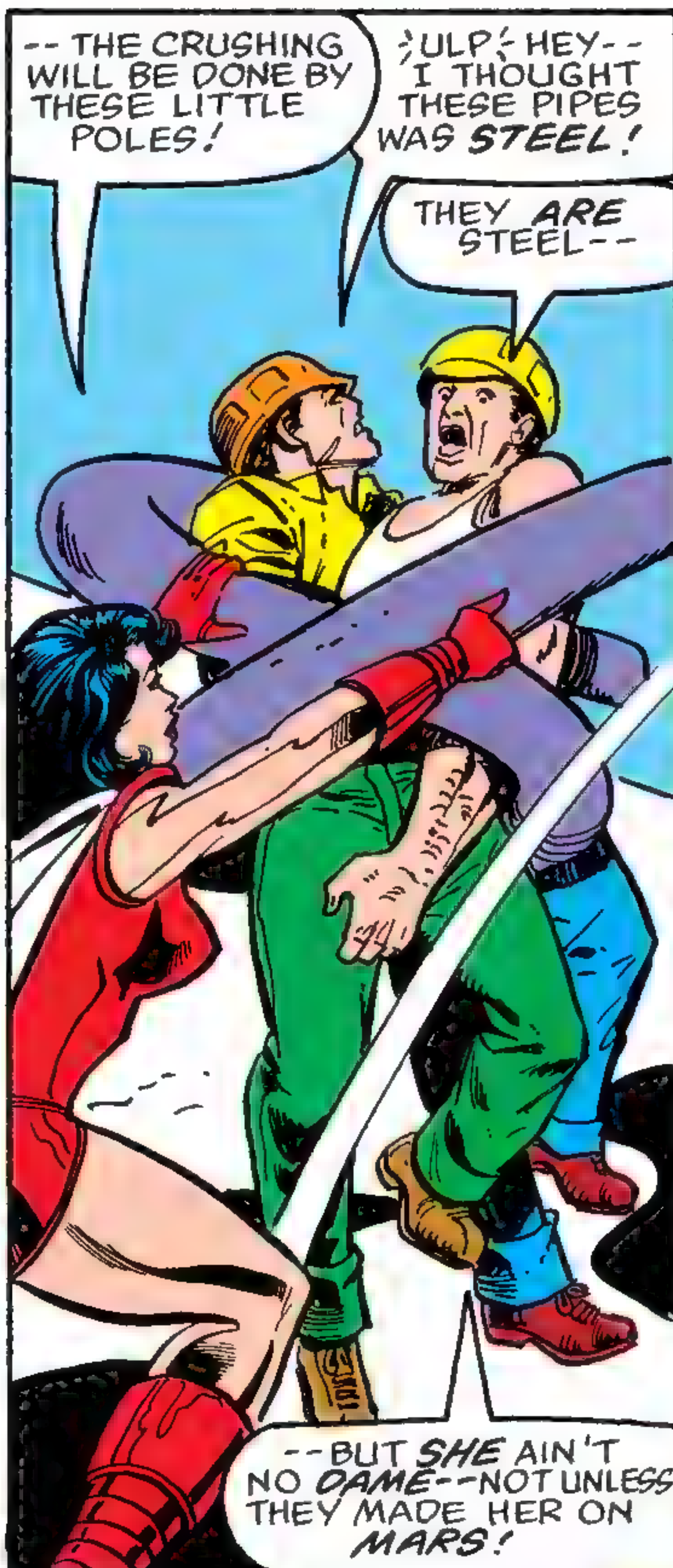






AYE-- MAYHAP I DO, MORTAL!

BUT SINCE I HAVE NO DESIRE TO TOUCH THEE--



-- THE CRUSHING WILL BE DONE BY THESE LITTLE POLES!

ULP! HEY-- I THOUGHT THESE PIPES WAS STEEL!

THEY ARE STEEL--

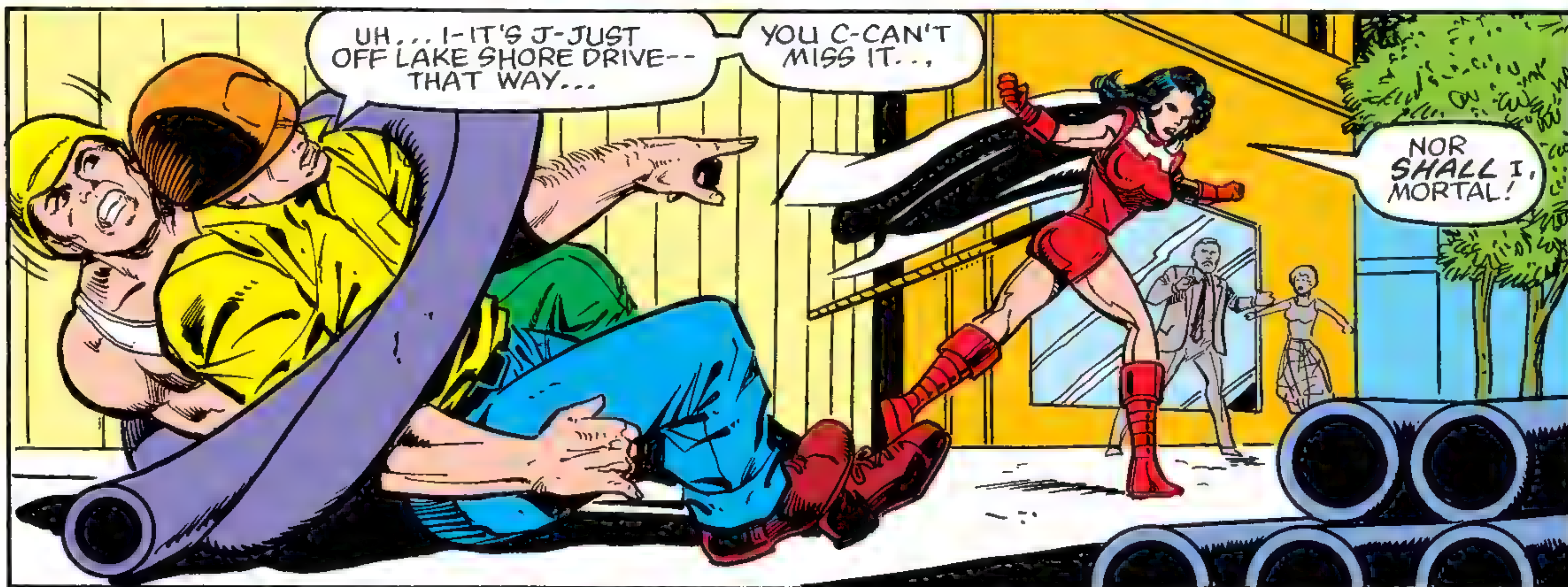
--BUT SHE AIN'T NO DAME--NOT UNLESS THEY MADE HER ON MARS!



NOW-- WHERE IS MCCORMICK PLACE?

M-M-MCCORMICK PLACE--?!

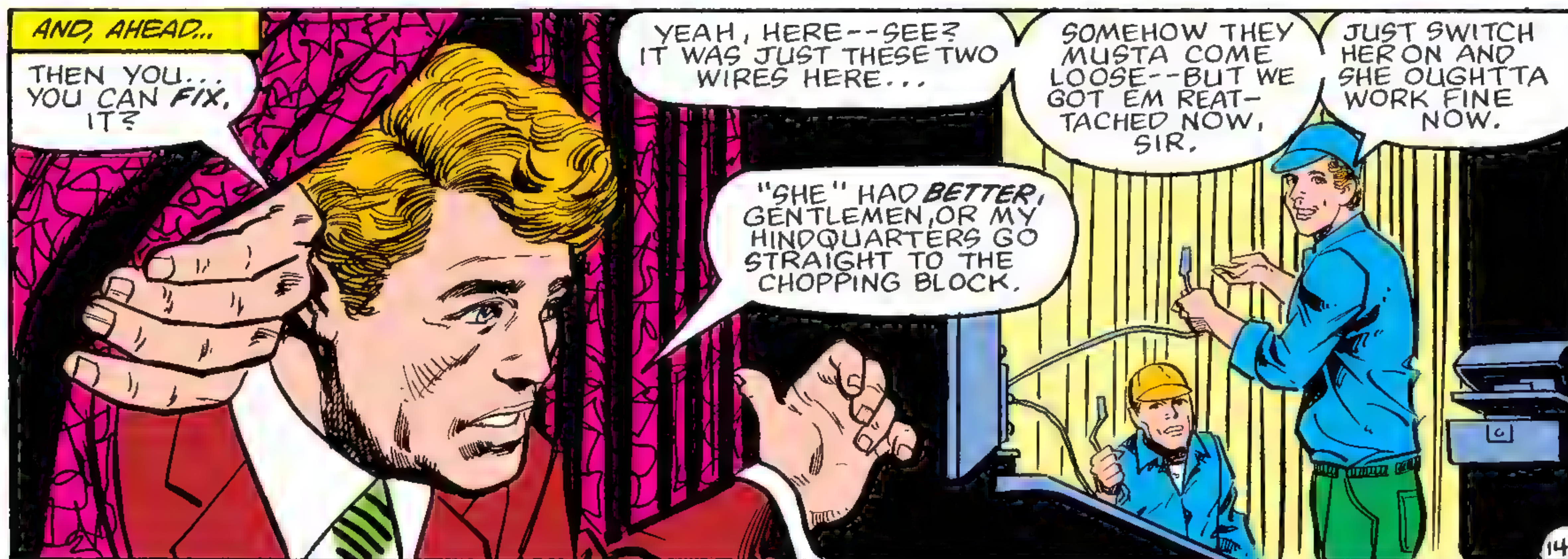
ART THOU DEAF AS WELL AS STUPID? WHERE DOOTH THE PLACE LIE?



UH... I-IT'S J-JUST OFF LAKE SHORE DRIVE-- THAT WAY...

YOU C-CAN'T MISS IT...

NOR SHALL I, MORTAL!



AND, AHEAD...

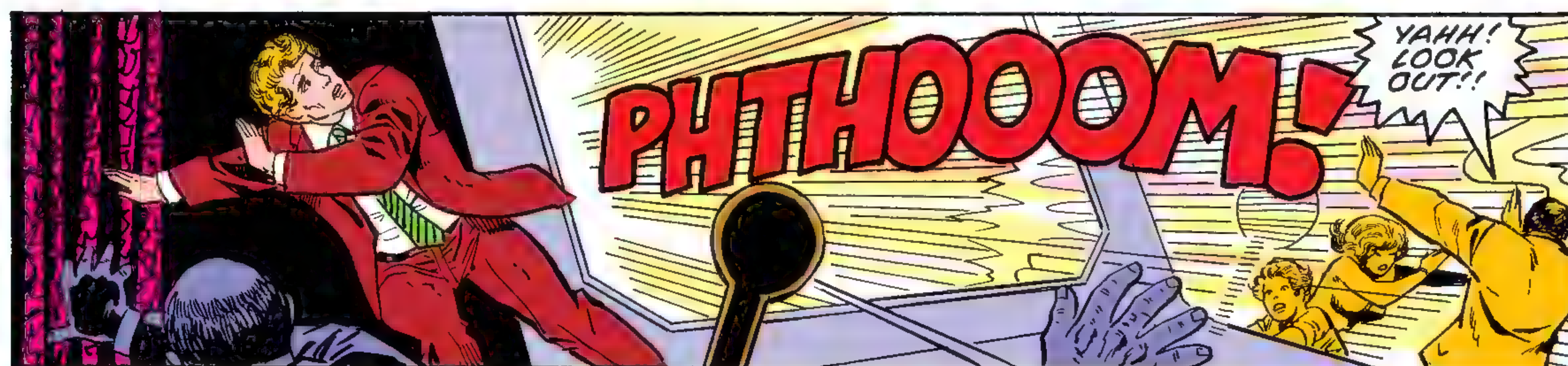
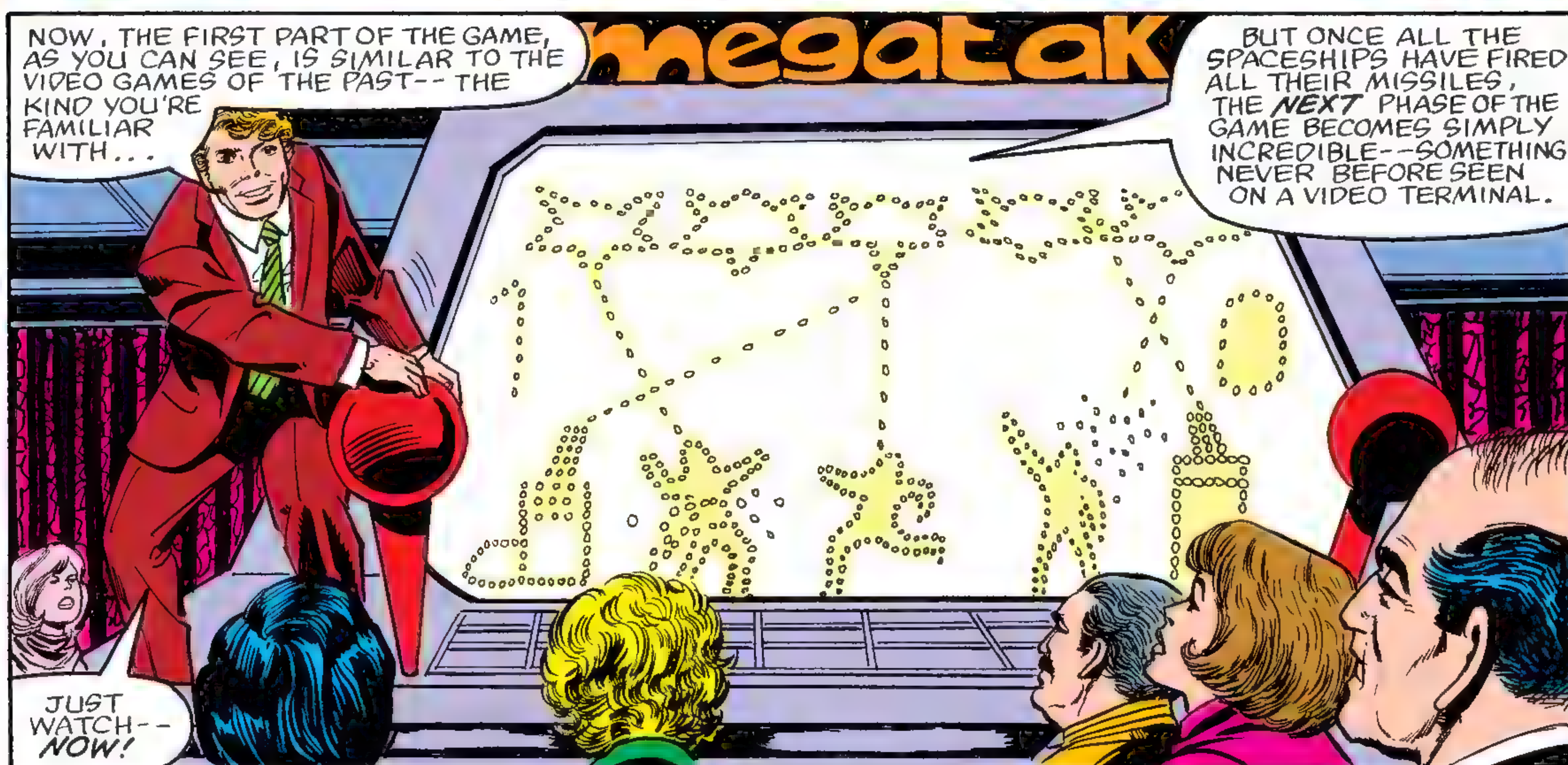
THEN YOU... YOU CAN FIX, IT?

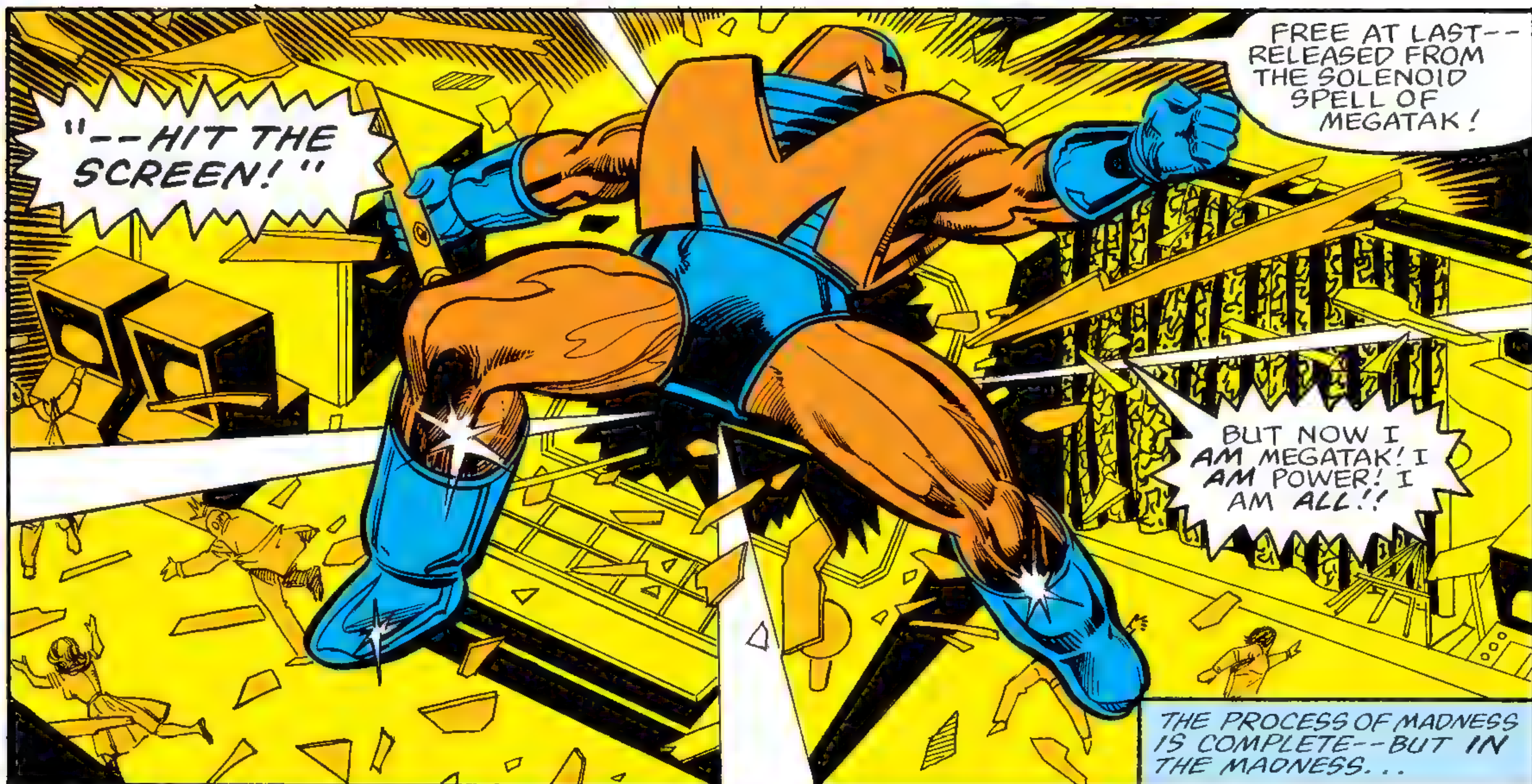
YEAH, HERE--SEE? IT WAS JUST THESE TWO WIRES HERE...

SOMEHOW THEY MUSTA COME LOOSE--BUT WE GOT EM REAT-TACHED NOW, SIR.

JUST SWITCH HER ON AND SHE OUGHTTA WORK FINE NOW.

"SHE" HAD BETTER, GENTLEMEN, OR MY HINDQUARTERS GO STRAIGHT TO THE CHOPPING BLOCK.



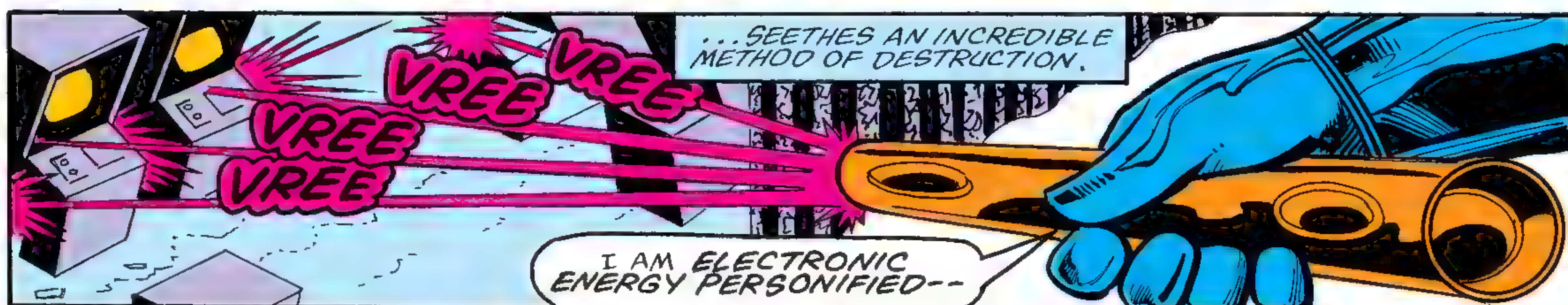


"-- HIT THE SCREEN! "

FREE AT LAST--
RELEASED FROM
THE SOLENOID
SPELL OF
MEGATAK!

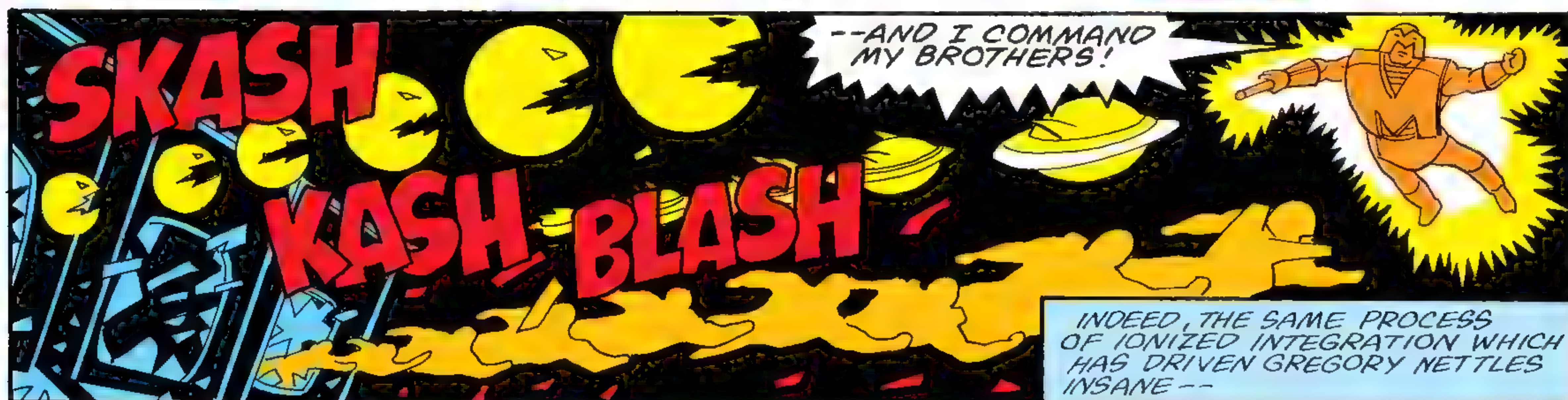
BUT NOW I
AM MEGATAK! I
AM POWER! I
AM ALL!!

THE PROCESS OF MADNESS
IS COMPLETE-- BUT IN
THE MADNESS...



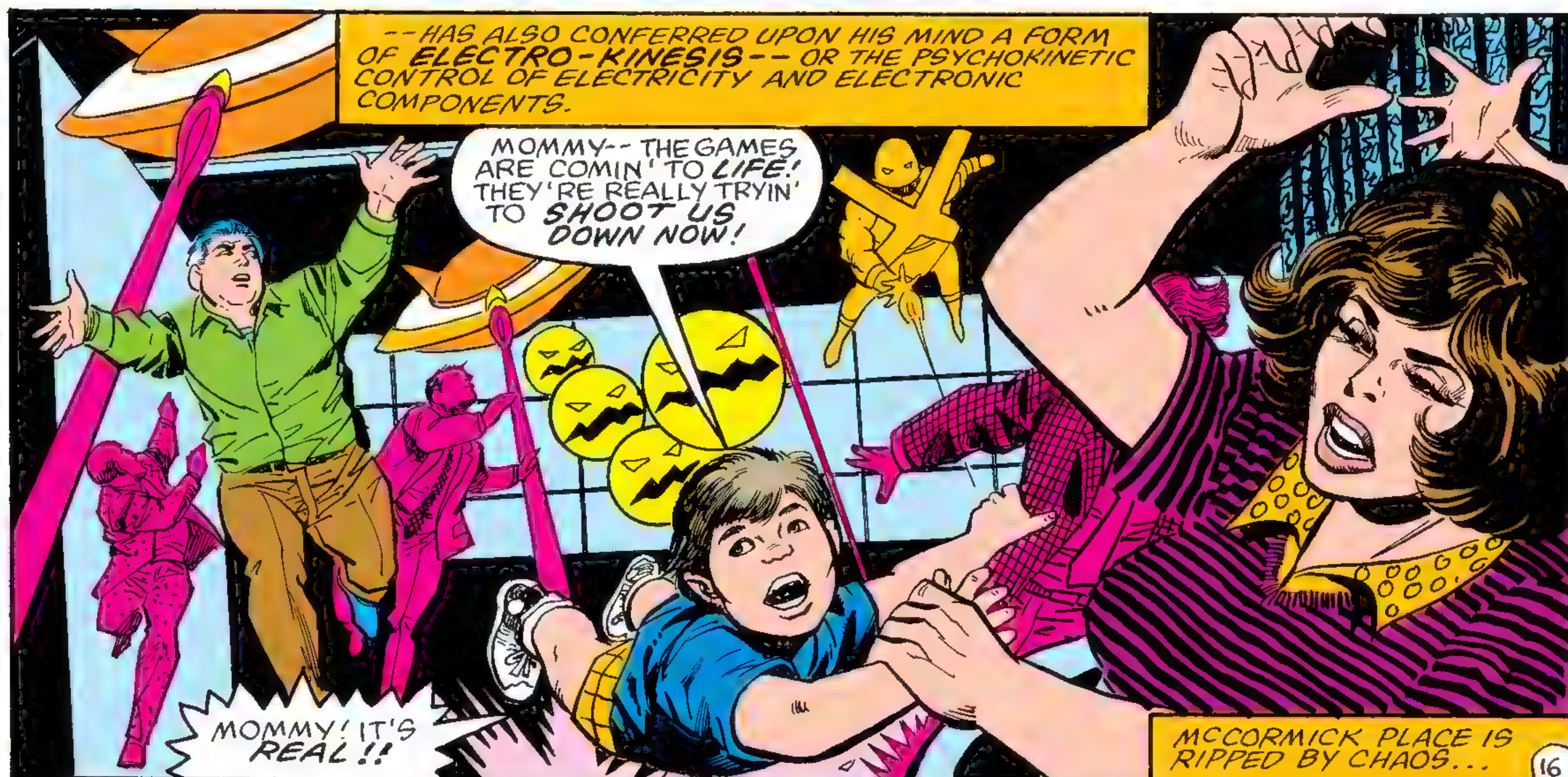
... SEETHES AN INCREDIBLE
METHOD OF DESTRUCTION.

I AM ELECTRONIC
ENERGY PERSONIFIED--



-- AND I COMMAND
MY BROTHERS!

INDEED, THE SAME PROCESS
OF IONIZED INTEGRATION WHICH
HAS DRIVEN GREGORY NETTLES
INSANE --

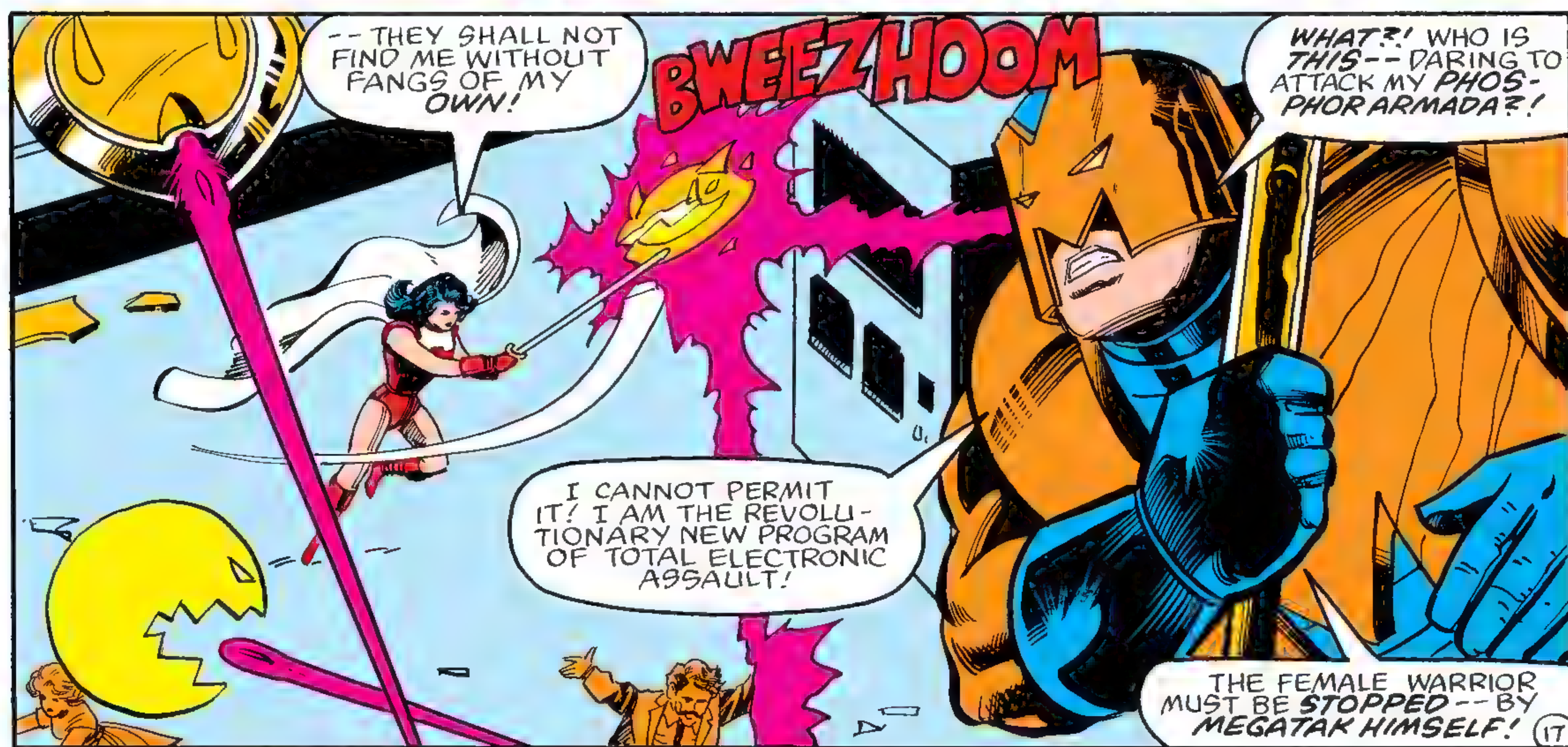
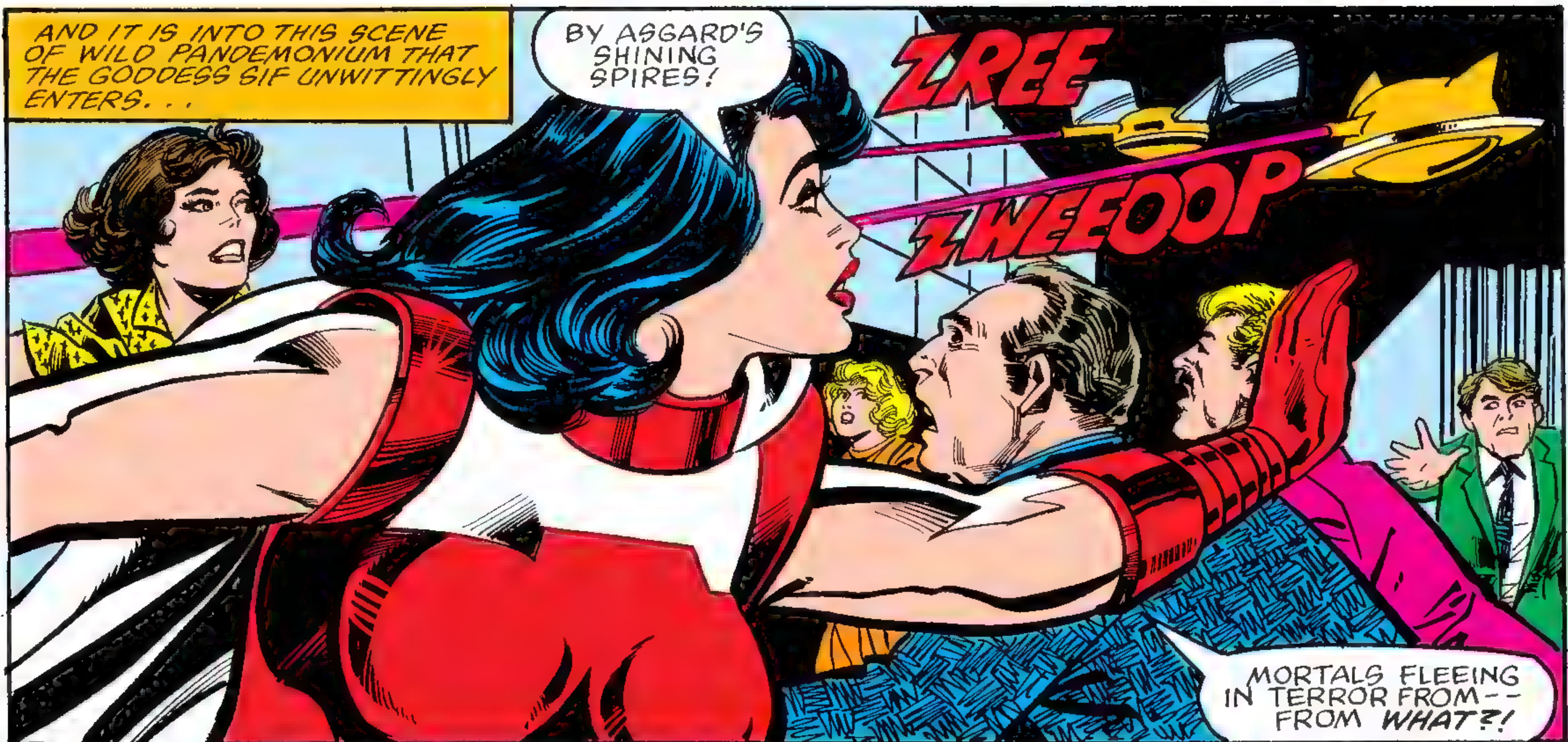


-- HAS ALSO CONFERRED UPON HIS MIND A FORM
OF ELECTRO-KINESIS-- OR THE PSYCHOKINETIC
CONTROL OF ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRONIC
COMPONENTS.

MOMMY-- THE GAMES
ARE COMIN' TO LIFE!
THEY'RE REALLY TRYIN'
TO SHOOT US
DOWN NOW!

MOMMY! IT'S
REAL!!

MCCORMICK PLACE IS
RIPPED BY CHAOS...



ELSEWHERE...

-- INTERRUPT OUR MEDLEY OF JOHNNY MATHIS HITS AS PERFORMED BY THE 101 STRINGS TO BRING YOU THIS NEWS BULLETIN: A NUMBER OF ELECTRONIC MACHINES HAVE REPORTEDLY GONE BERSERK AT THE MCCORMICK PLACE CONVENTION OF--



WHAT?!

UH, I'LL BE UNAVAILABLE FOR A WHILE, NURSE STEVENS-- HOLD MY PATIENTS-- IT'S AN EMERGENCY CASE.

AND IN THE PRIVACY OF BLAKE'S APARTMENT...

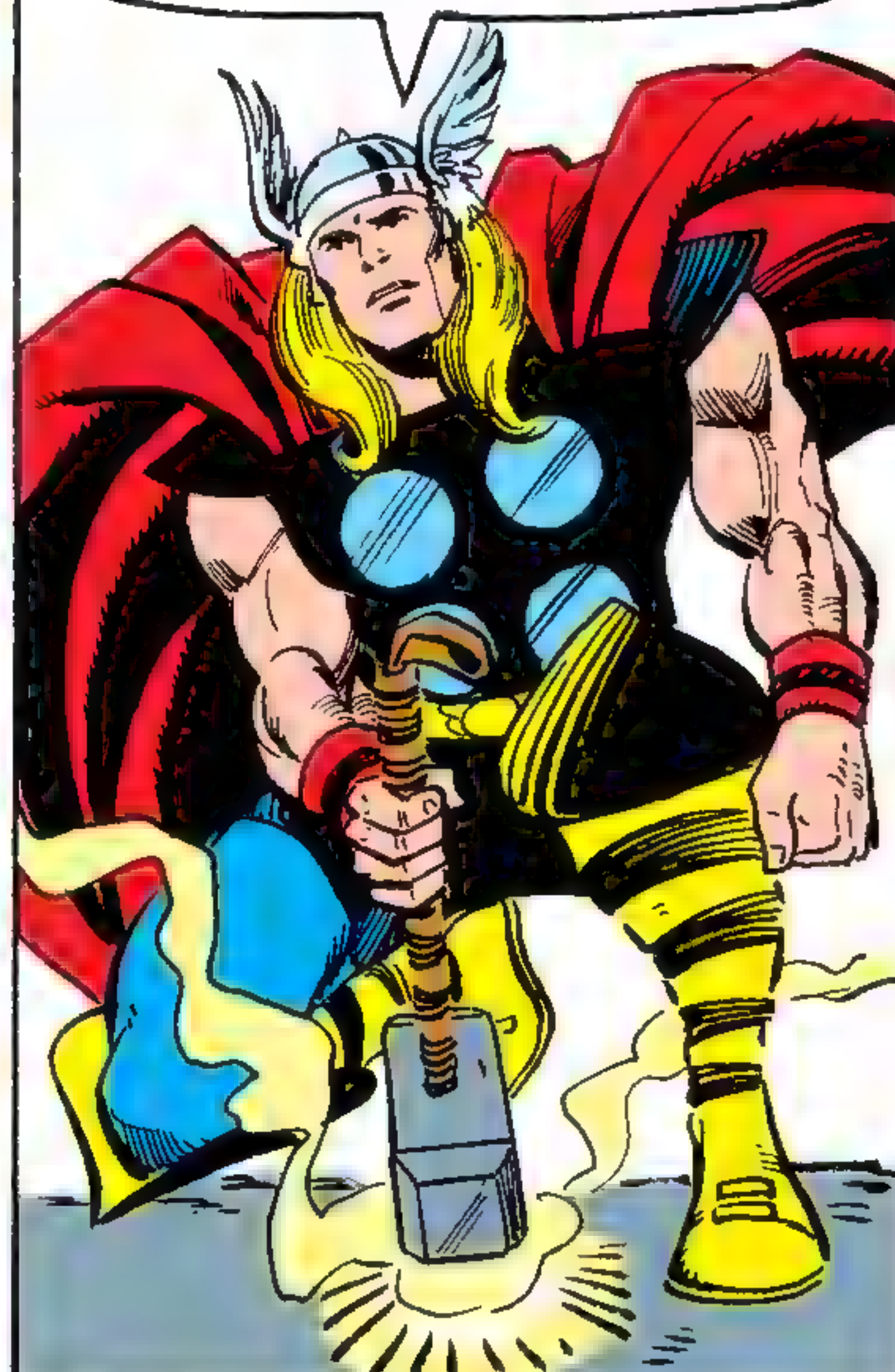
SHAWNA SAID SHE MIGHT GO TO MCCORMICK PLACE TODAY!

AND EVEN IF SHE ISN'T THERE...



BOOOM

... 'TIS THOR'S SWORN DUTY TO PROTECT ALL MORTALS FROM HARM!



IN A TWINKLING...



SIF, BUT HOW DIDST THOU--

CARE NOT FOR THE "HOW", THOR...

...THE WHAT AND THE WHY ARE ENOUGH TO CONCERN THEE FOR NOW!

ZHREE

ZHREE

AYE, SIF-- 'TWOULD SEEM SO.

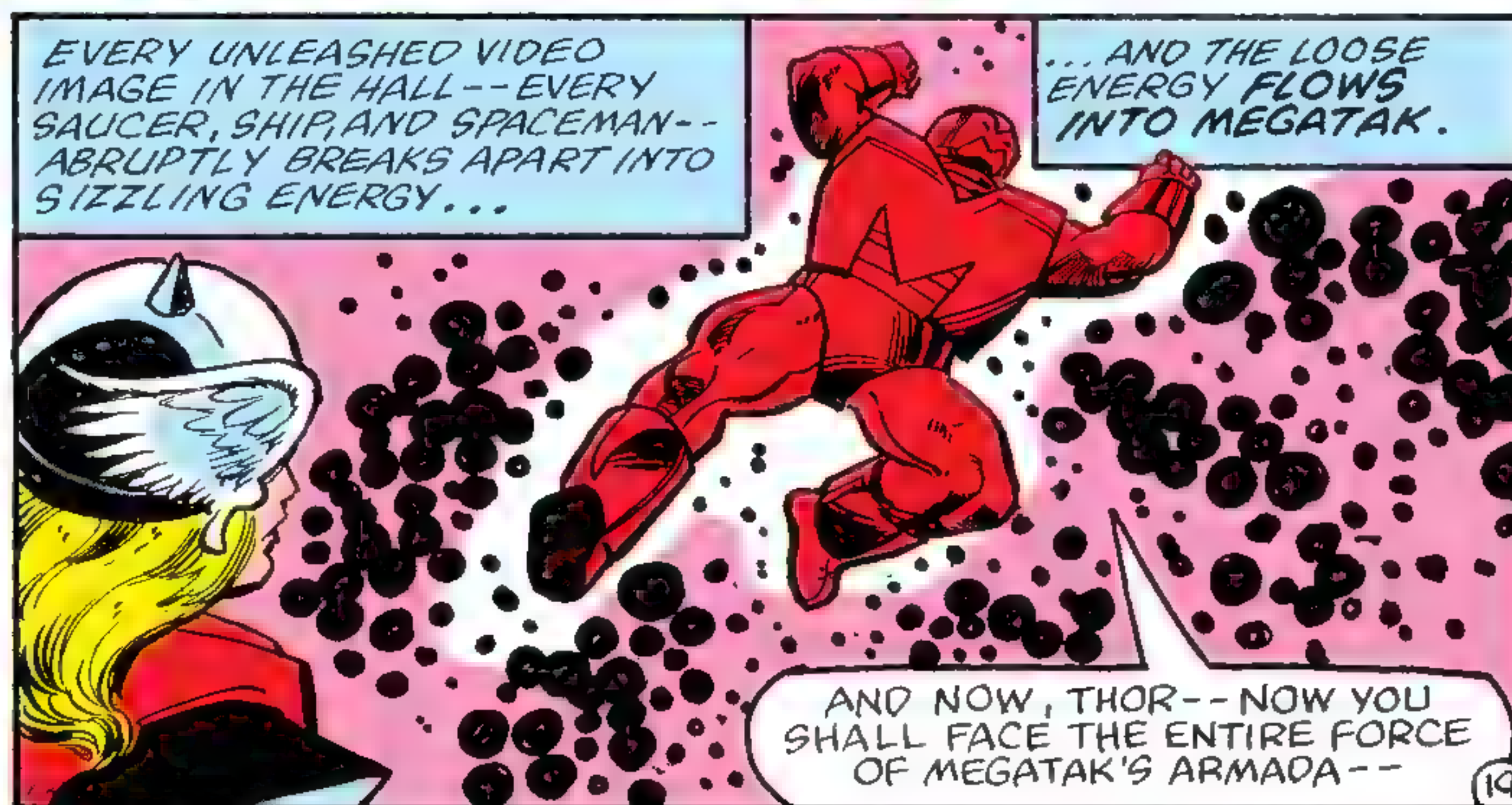
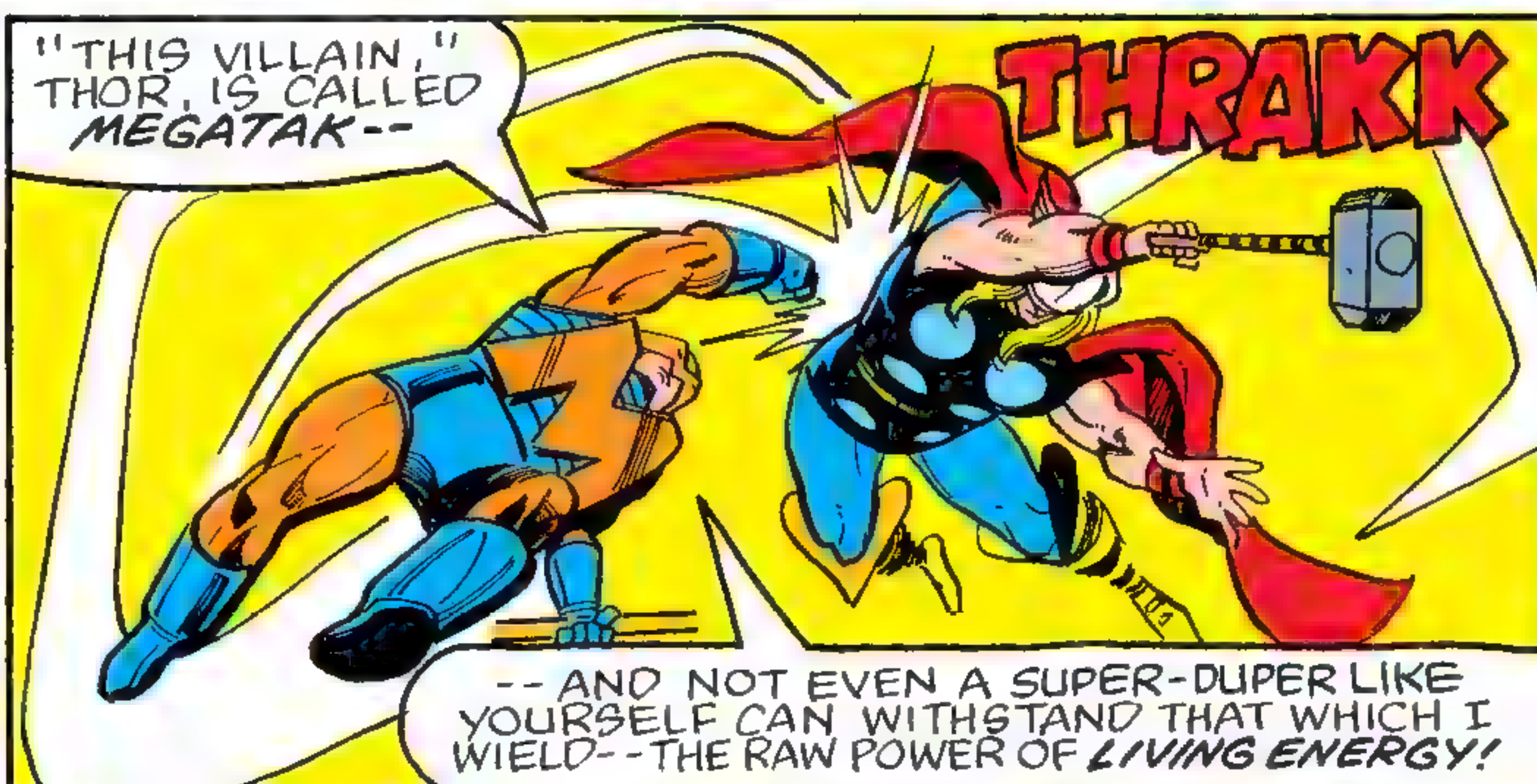
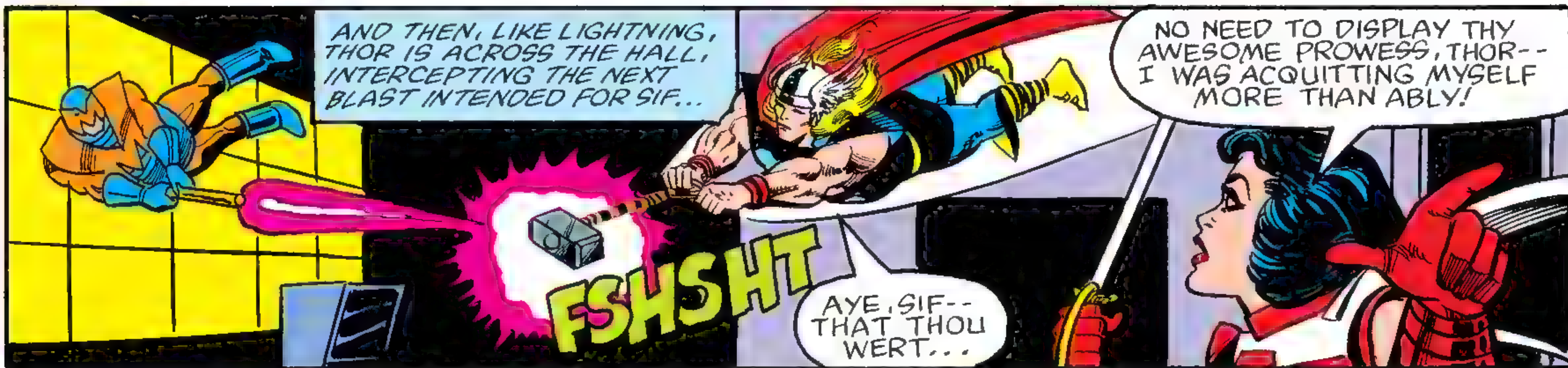
IT'S THOR-- HE'LL SAVE US!

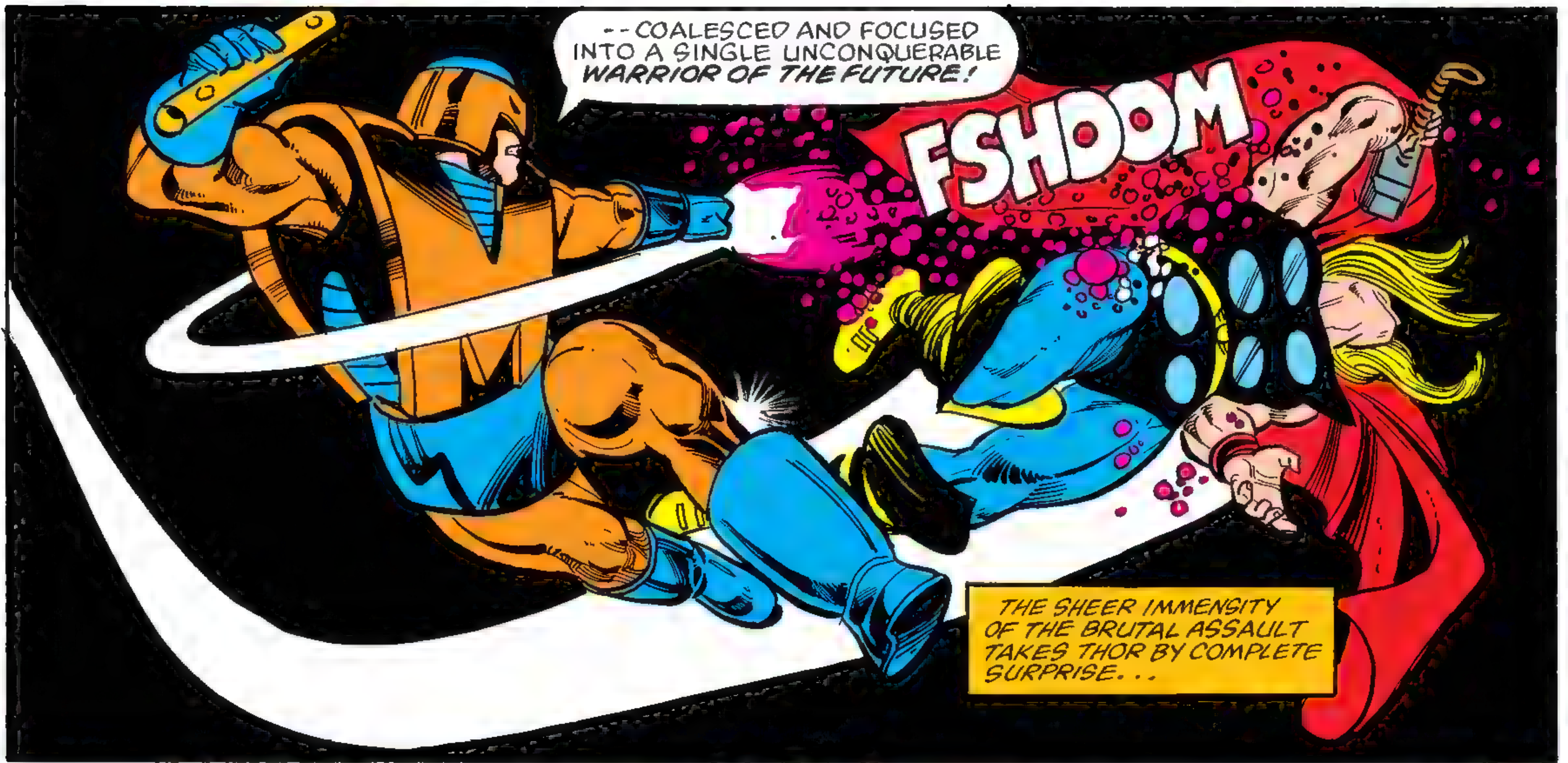
I HOPE.

BRAZZZZT

MIGHTY MJOLNIR CUTS THROUGH ZIGGING SAUCERS AND ZAGGING SHIPS LIKE A BUZZSAW...

THEY GO DOWN IN VIDEO FLAMES.





-- COALESCED AND FOCUSED INTO A SINGLE UNCONQUERABLE WARRIOR OF THE FUTURE!

FSDOOM

THE SHEER IMMENSITY OF THE BRUTAL ASSAULT TAKES THOR BY COMPLETE SURPRISE...



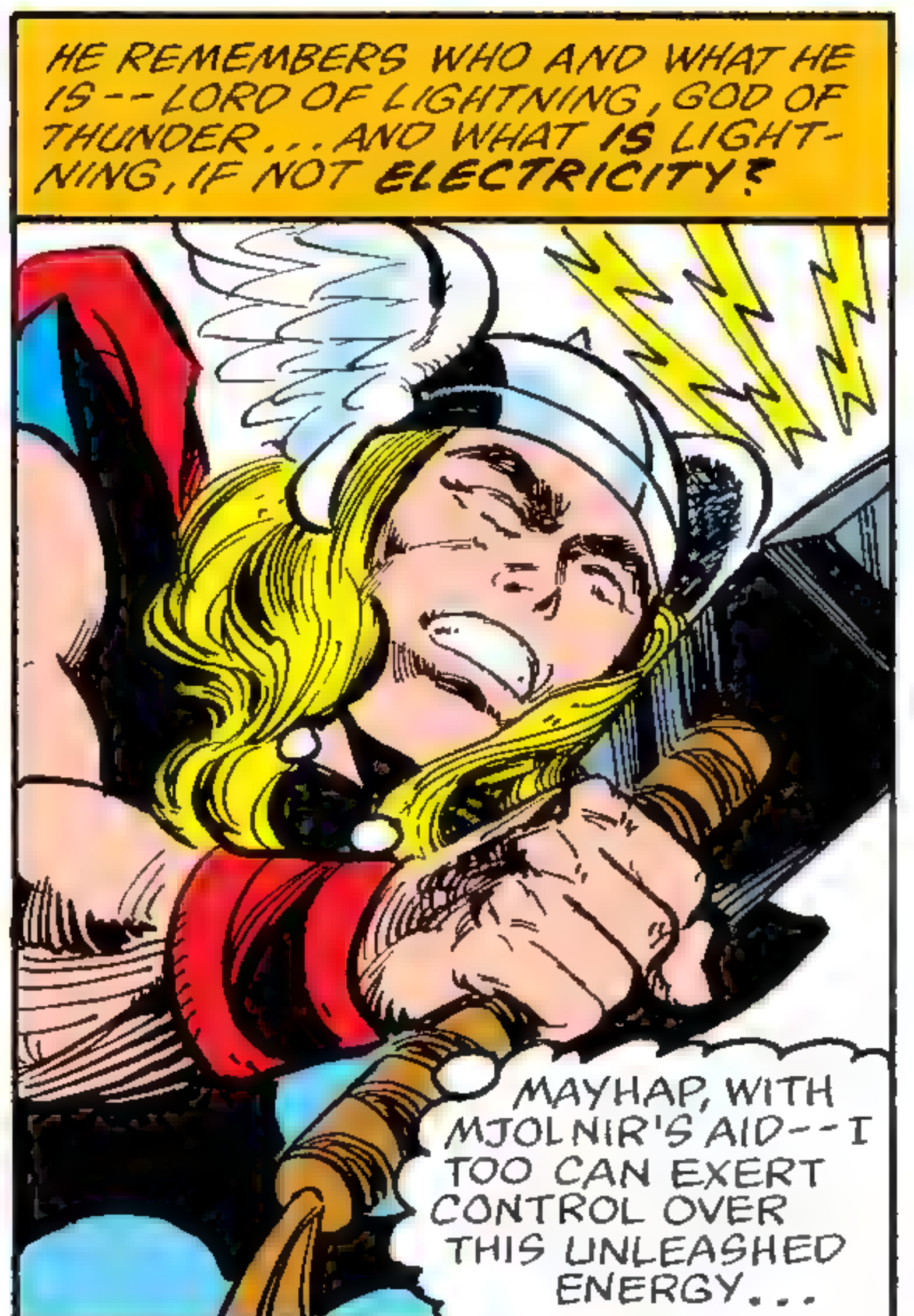
... AND BEFORE HE CAN RECOVER--

-- MEGATAK ASSAILS HIM AGAIN, INDIRECTLY THIS TIME, SUMMONING DESTRUCTIVE ENERGY FROM EVERY GADGET IN THE HALL.



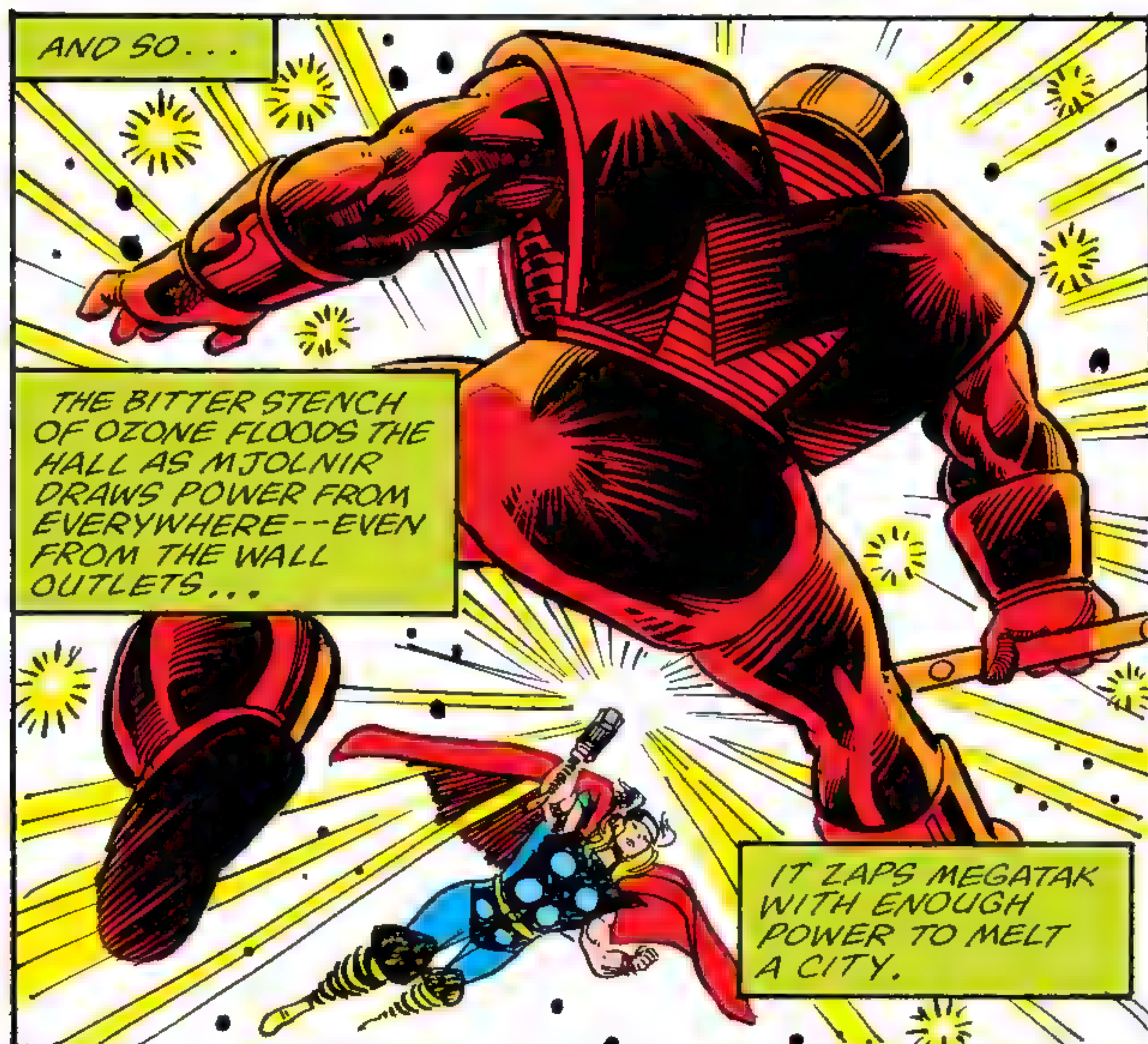
EVEN THE AUDIO SPEAKERS ATTACK HIM-- WITH THE HYPER-DISTORTION OF SCREECHING ELECTRONIC FEEDBACK...

BUT THEN, EVEN IN CONFUSION AND PAIN, THOR'S SAVING GRACE-- AS EVER-- IS HIS VERY IDENTITY...



HE REMEMBERS WHO AND WHAT HE IS-- LORD OF LIGHTNING, GOD OF THUNDER... AND WHAT IS LIGHTNING, IF NOT ELECTRICITY?

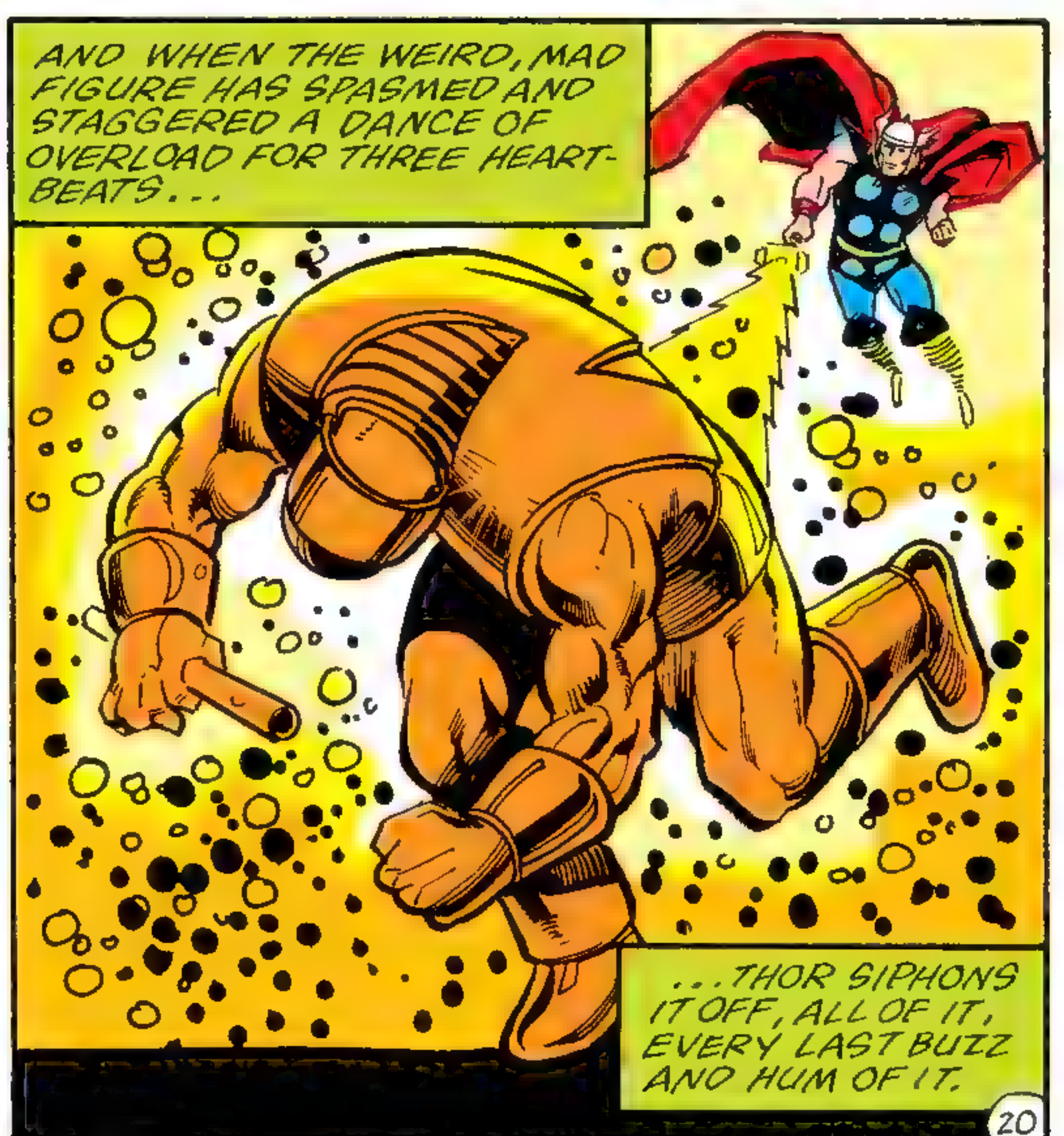
MAYHAP, WITH MJOLNIR'S AID-- I TOO CAN EXERT CONTROL OVER THIS UNLEASHED ENERGY...



AND SO...

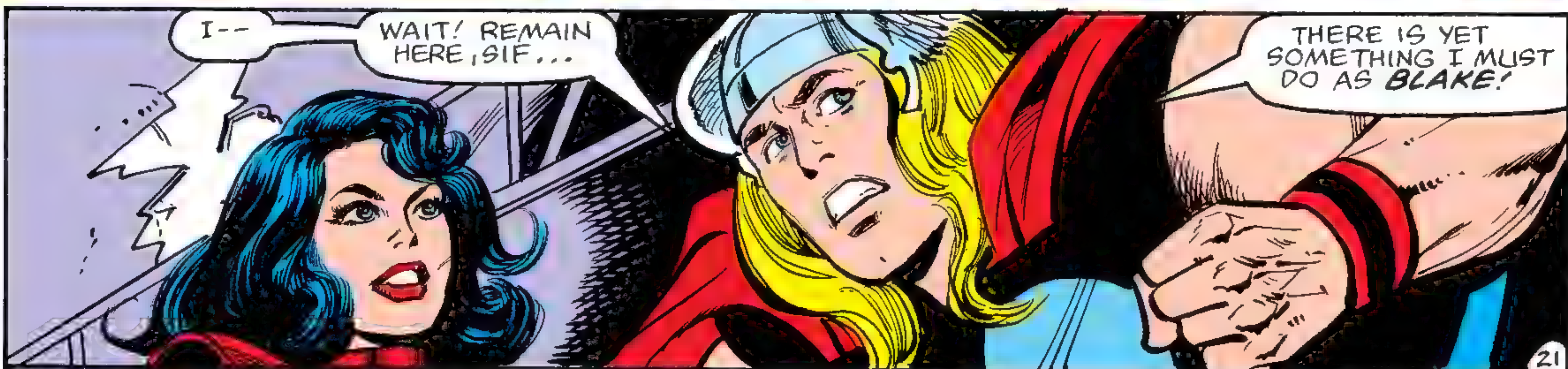
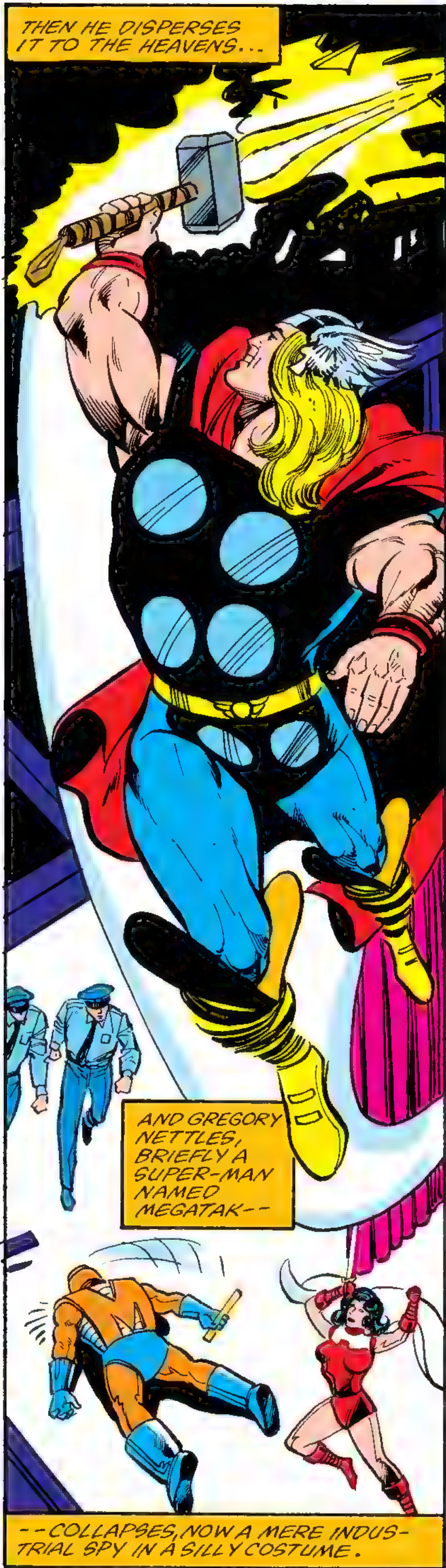
THE BITTER STENCH OF OZONE FLOODS THE HALL AS MJOLNIR DRAWS POWER FROM EVERYWHERE-- EVEN FROM THE WALL OUTLETS...

IT ZAPS MEGATAK WITH ENOUGH POWER TO MELT A CITY.



AND WHEN THE WEIRD, MAD FIGURE HAS SPASMED AND STAGGERED A DANCE OF OVERLOAD FOR THREE HEARTBEATS...

... THOR SIPHONS IT OFF, ALL OF IT, EVERY LAST BUZZ AND HUM OF IT.





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TM

THE
MIGHTY

THOR



HANNIGAN
+ JANSON
82

When DR. DONALD BLAKE strikes his wooden walking-stick upon the ground, it becomes the mystic hammer MJOLNIR—and the lame physician is transformed into the Norse God of Thunder, Master of the Storm, Lord of the Living Lightning—and heir to the throne of eternal Asgard....

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**®

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FINISHER

JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER

GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

STRANDED



'T WAS NO DREAM! I AM ABANDONED ON **MIDGARD**, THE PLANET HUMANS CALL **EARTH** AND THE REALM **THOR** HAS ADOPTED AS HIS OWN.

THOUGH THE THUNDER GOD AND I BE SWORN ENEMIES, HE ALONE CAN AID ME IN MY PLIGHT.



DESPITE THE THROBBING PAIN OF A DEEP WOUND IN HIS SIDE, THE STORM GIANT **HRUNGNIR** LIFTS HIMSELF AT LAST FROM THE FEVERISH SLEEP IN WHICH HE HAS LAIN THESE LAST TWENTY HOURS...

... AND SURVEYS HIS SURROUNDINGS, A TRUCK-LOADING ZONE AT **STARK INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX** ON **LONG ISLAND**.



BUT YESTERDAY*, MY FELLOW REBELS, LED BY **TYR** AND **LOKI**, FOUGHT **ODIN** AND THE LEGIONS OF **ASGARD** WITHIN THESE EARTHLY WALLS. FALLEN IN THE SHADOWS, I WAS ALL BUT FORGOTTEN AS **ODIN** GATHERED THE VANQUISHED FOR THEIR RETURN TO **ASGARD**.



*SEE **THOR** # 327.

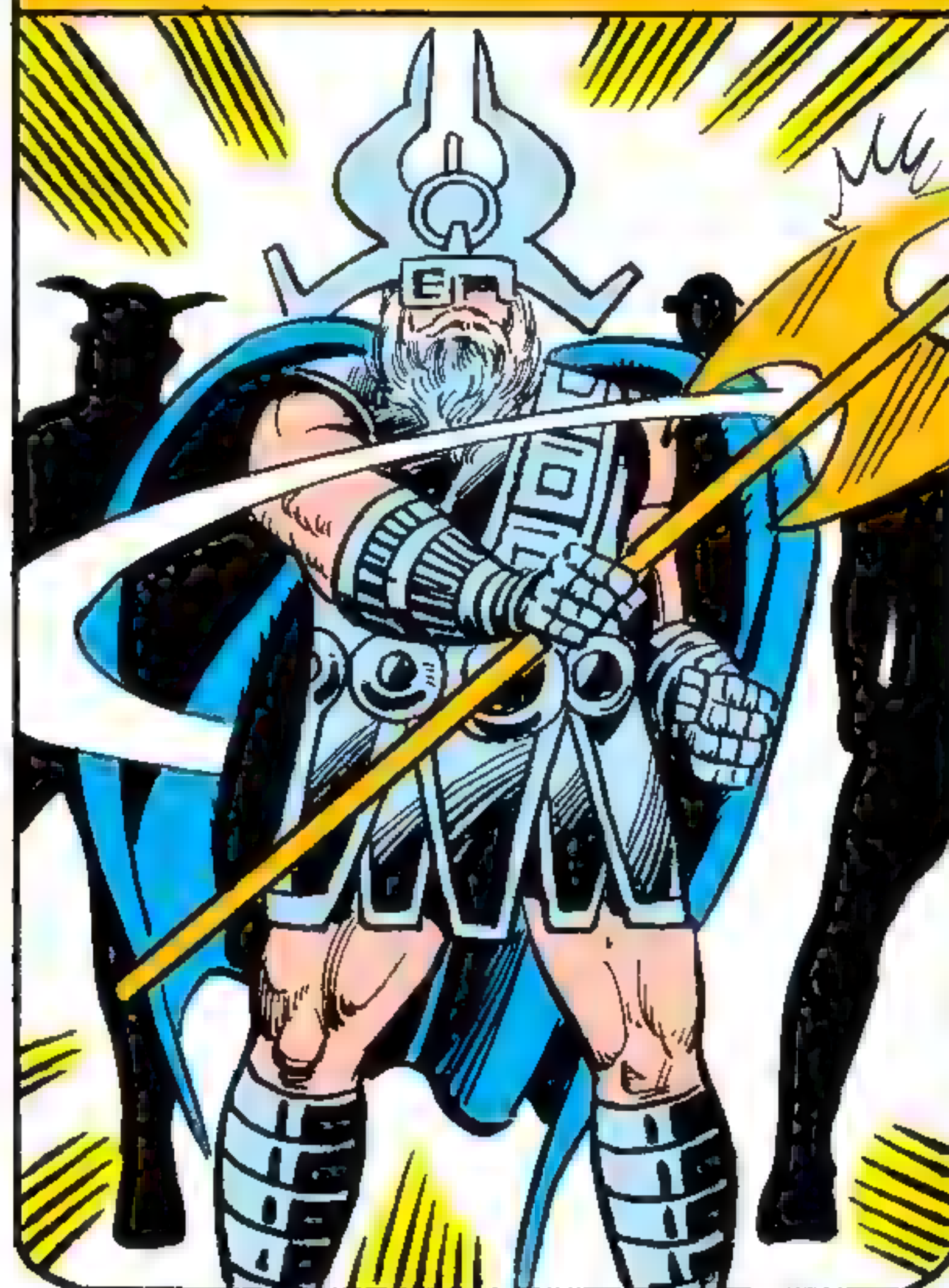
NOO!



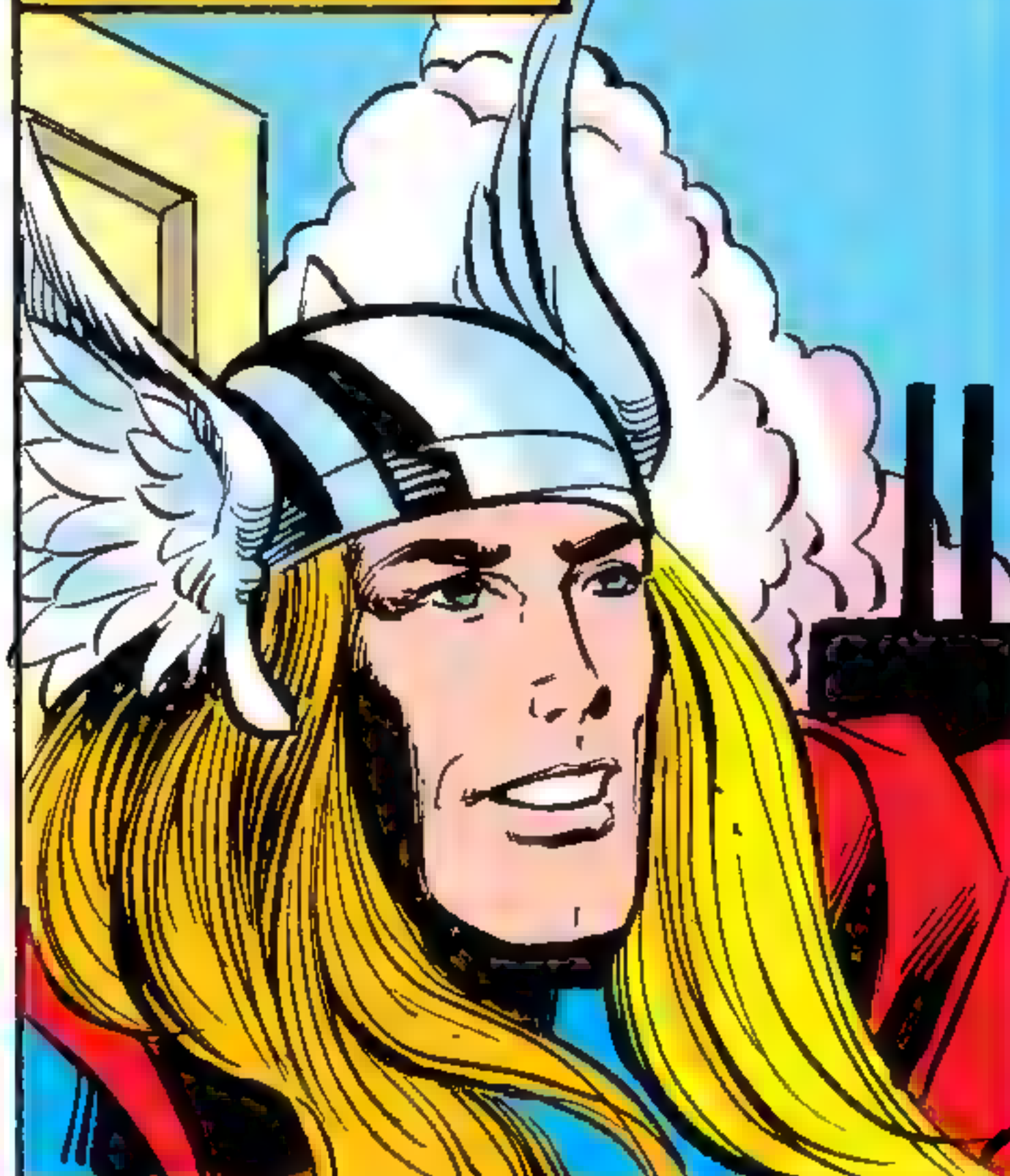
HASTEN! **HRUNGNIR** IS STRICKEN AND HALF-DEAD. LEAVE HIM AND RISK NOT **ODIN**'S WRATH FURTHER.



"NOR IN THE TUMULT OF VICTORIOUS CELEBRATION DID **ODIN** DETECT MY PRESENCE BEFORE HE AND HIS FELLOW GODS DEPARTED.



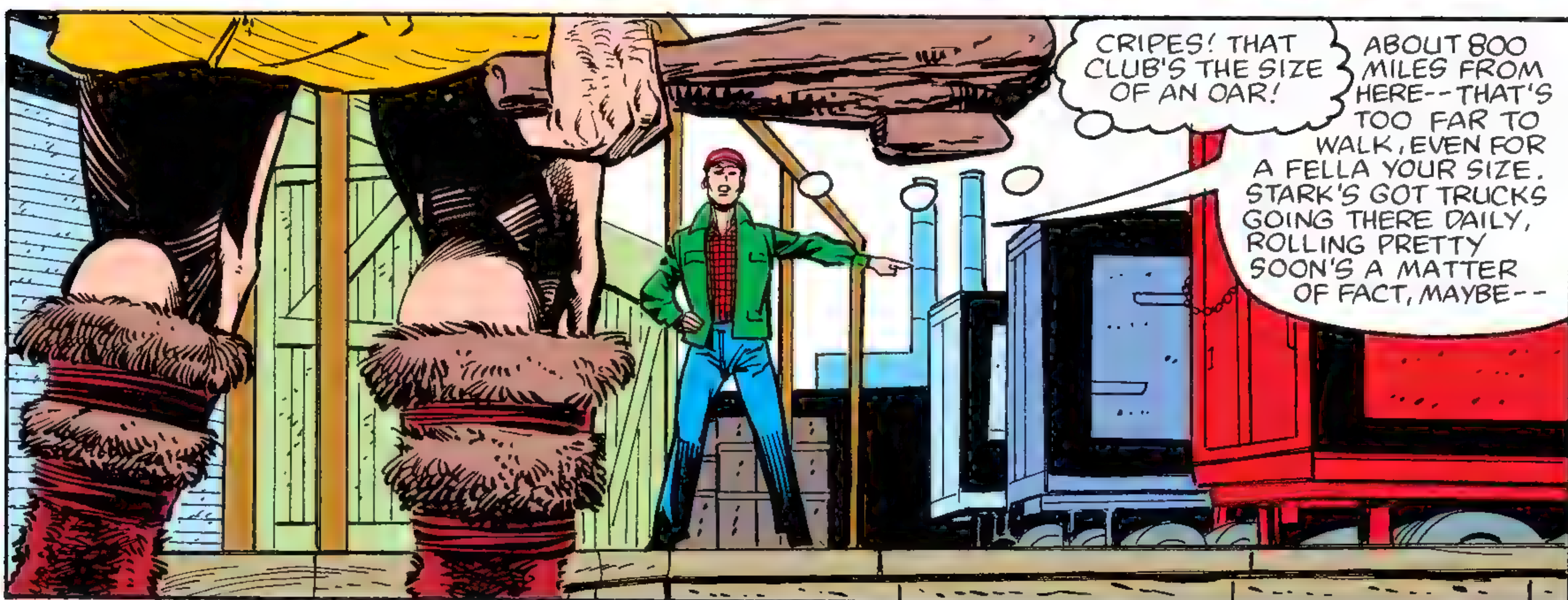
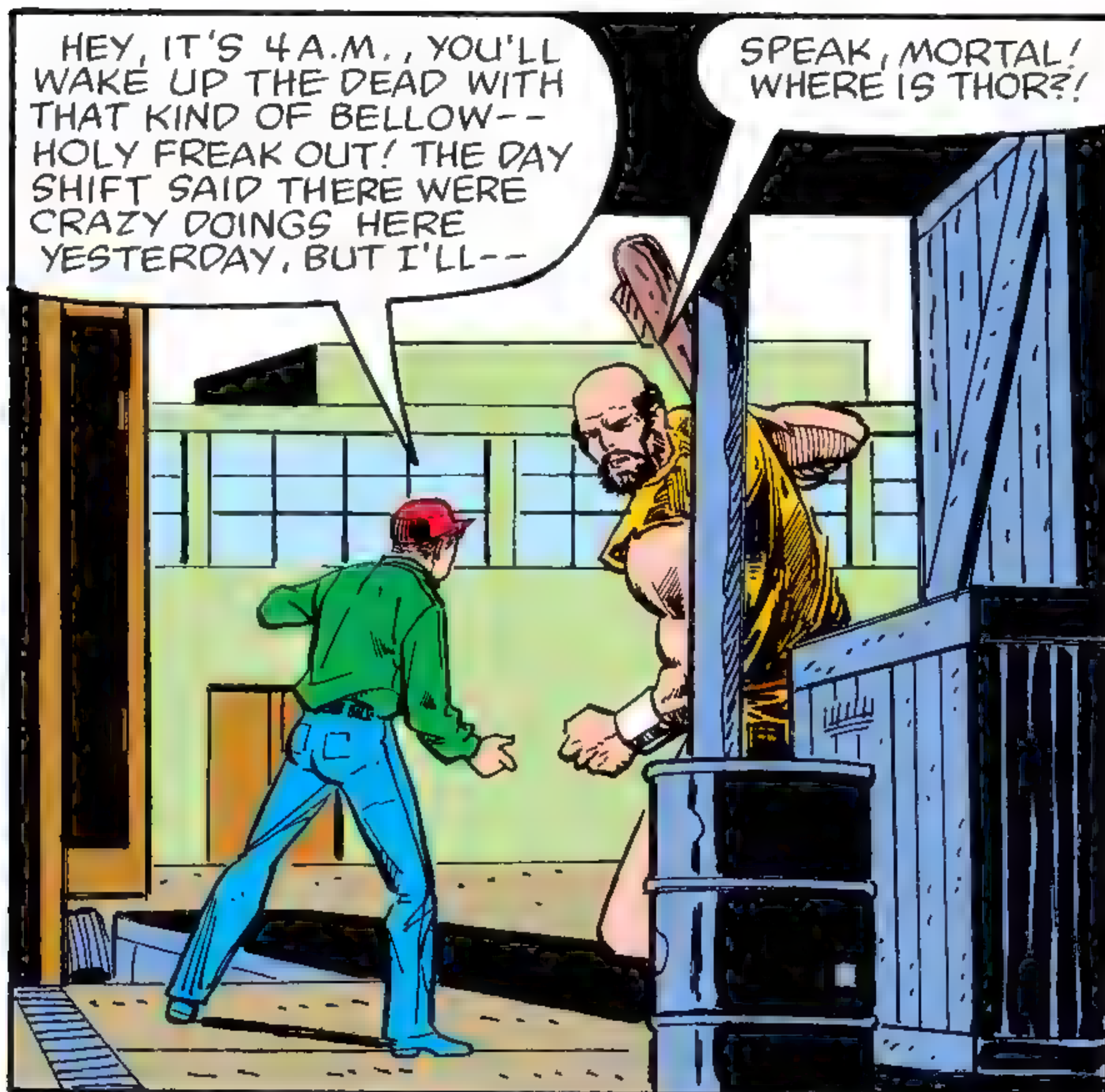
"NOW ONLY **THOR** REMAINS...

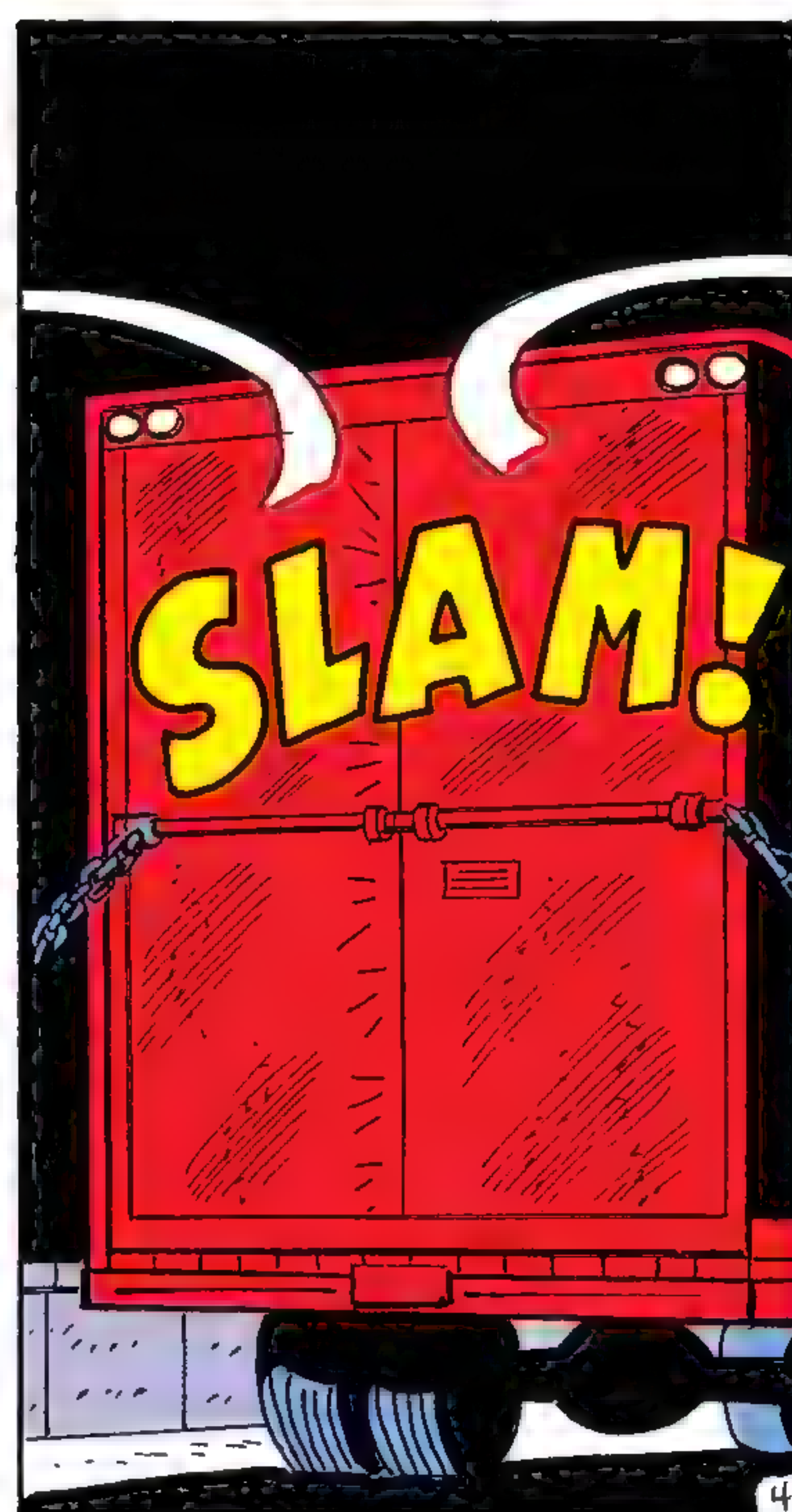
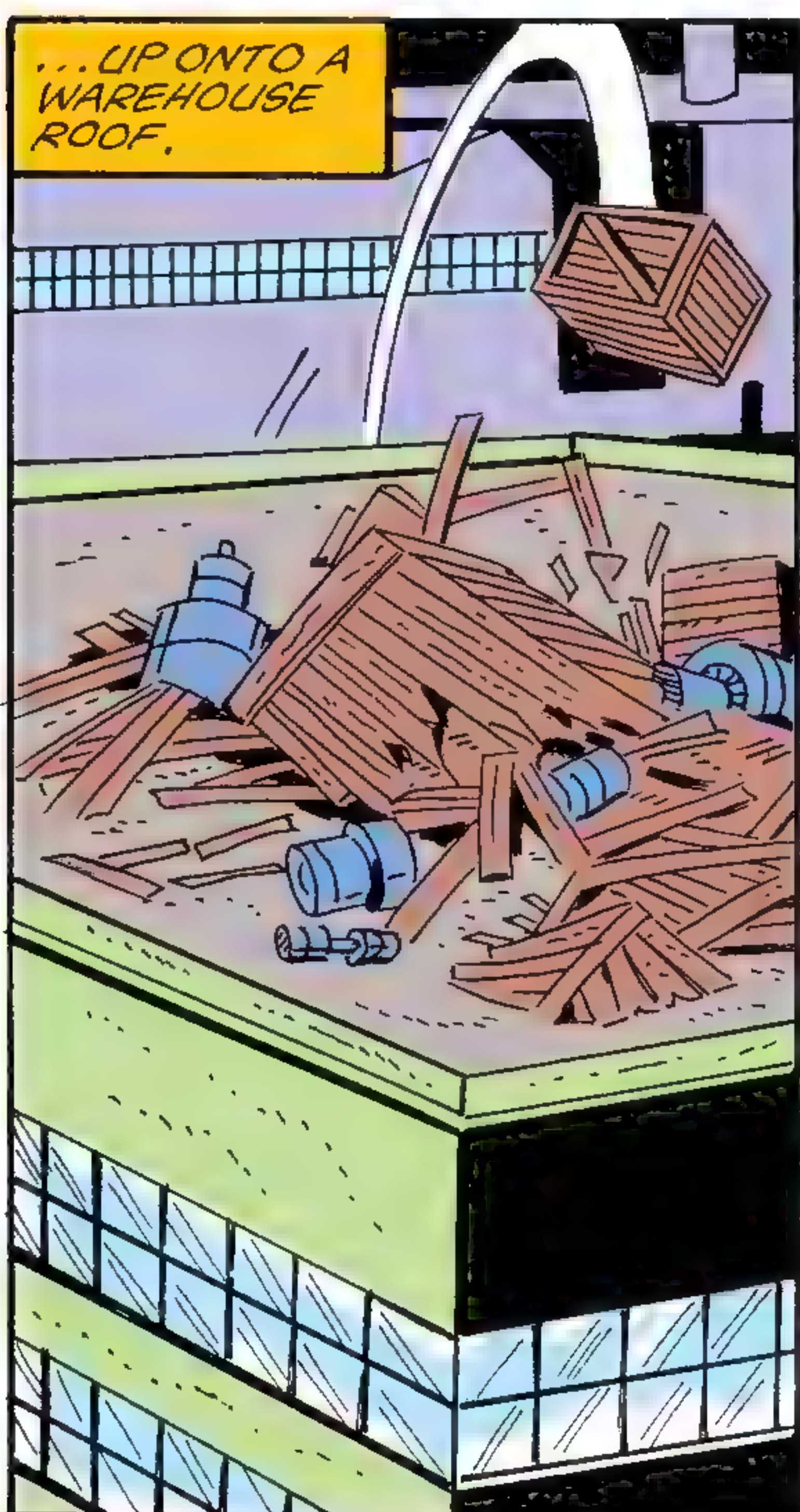
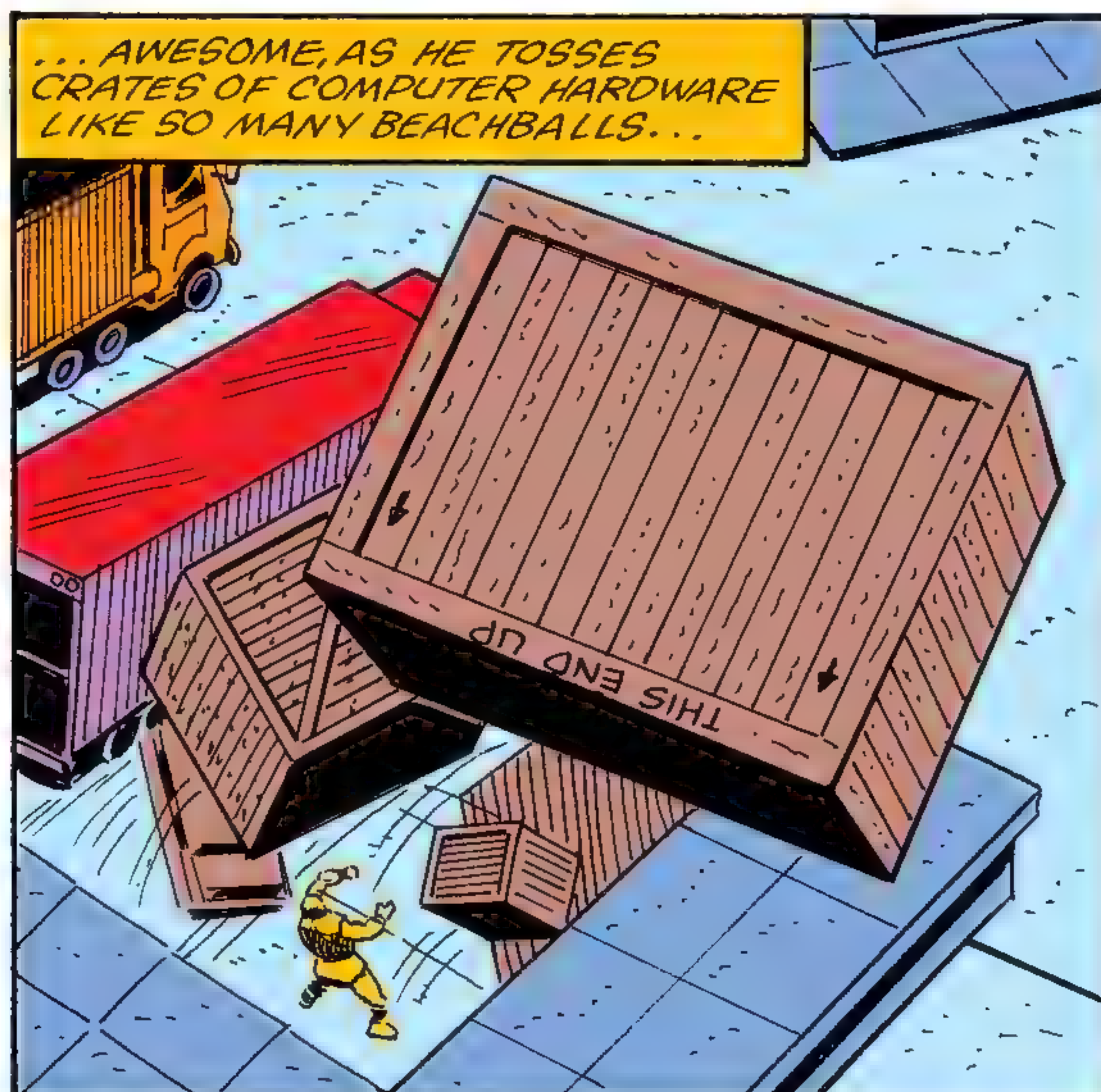
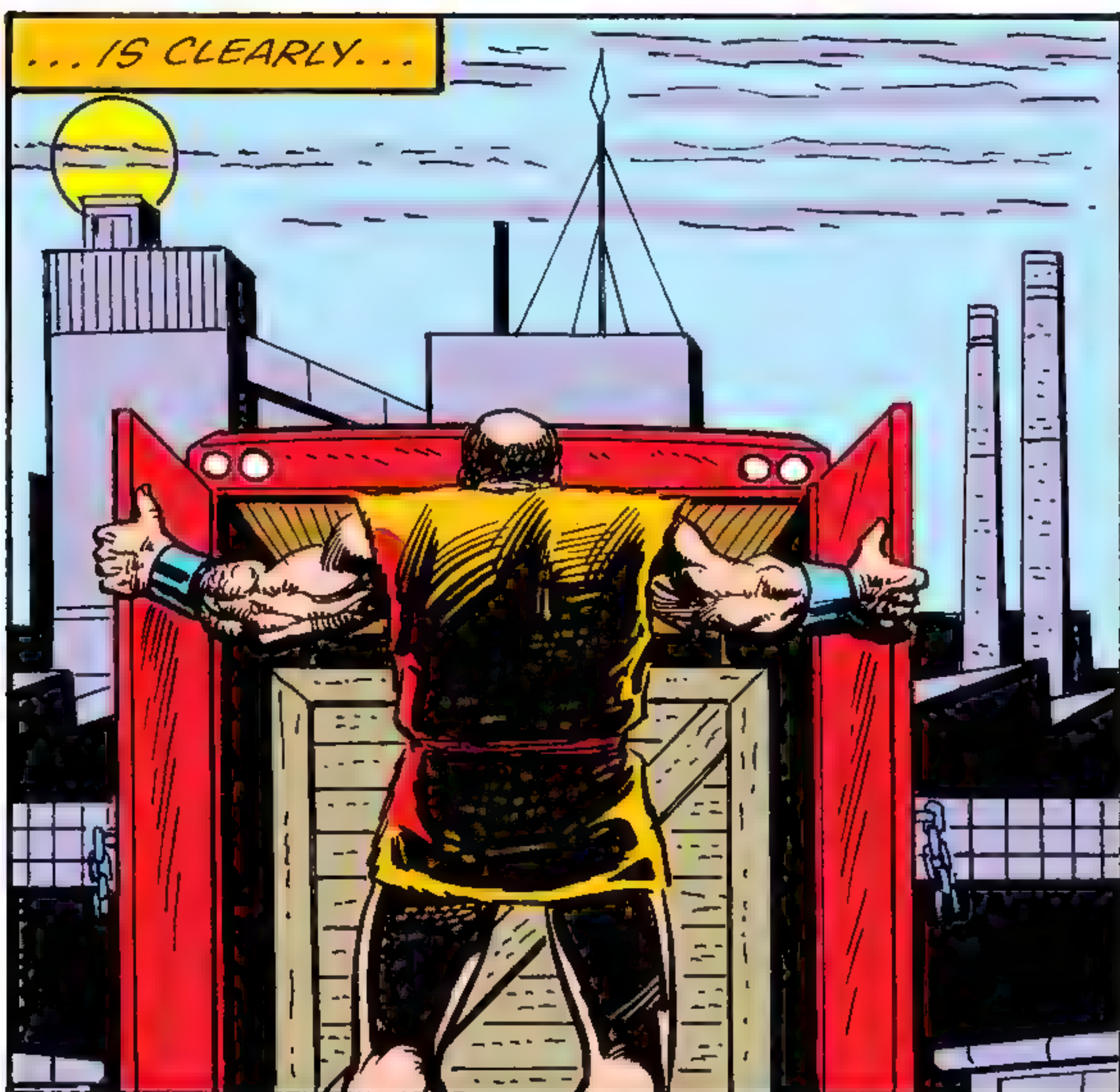
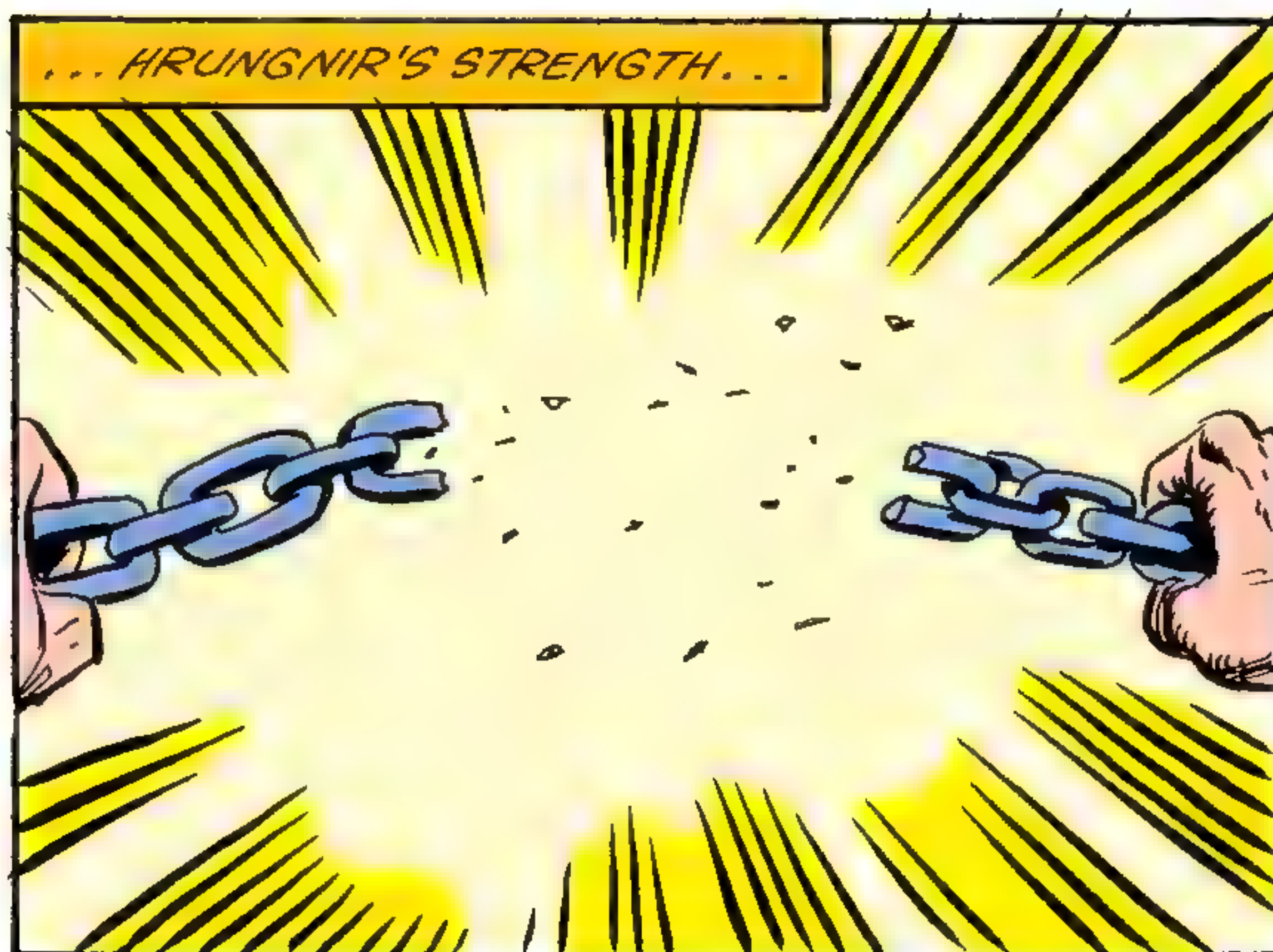
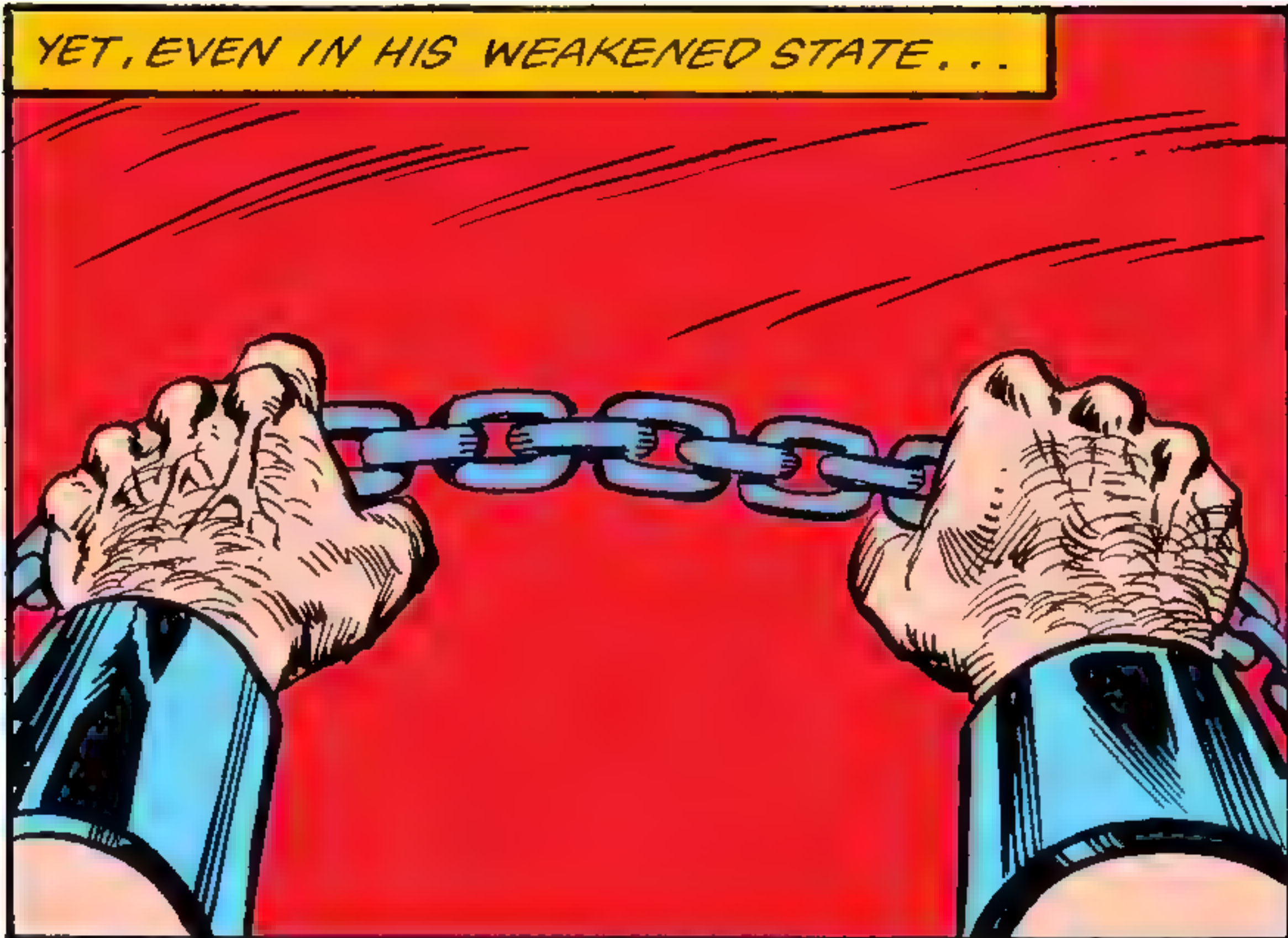


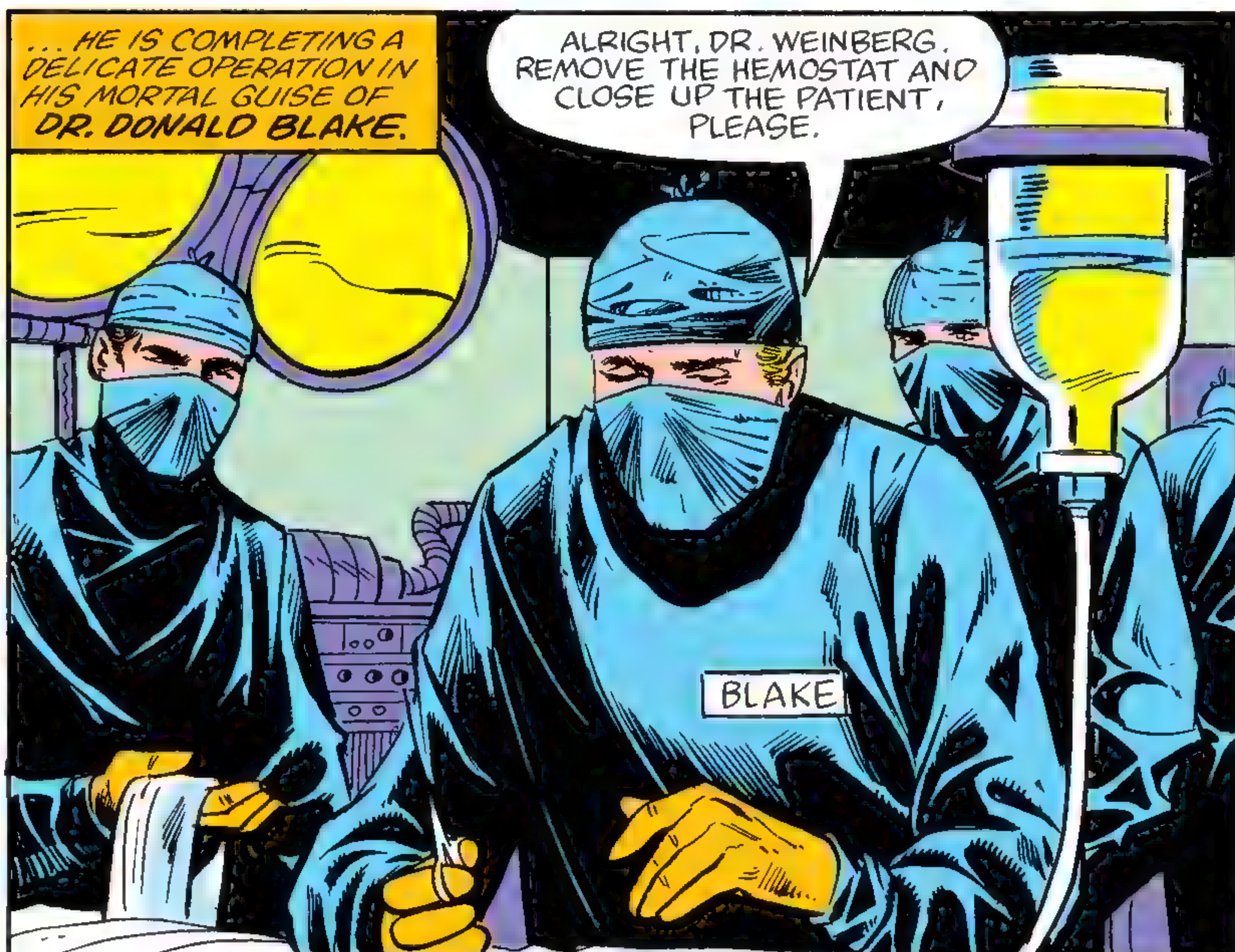
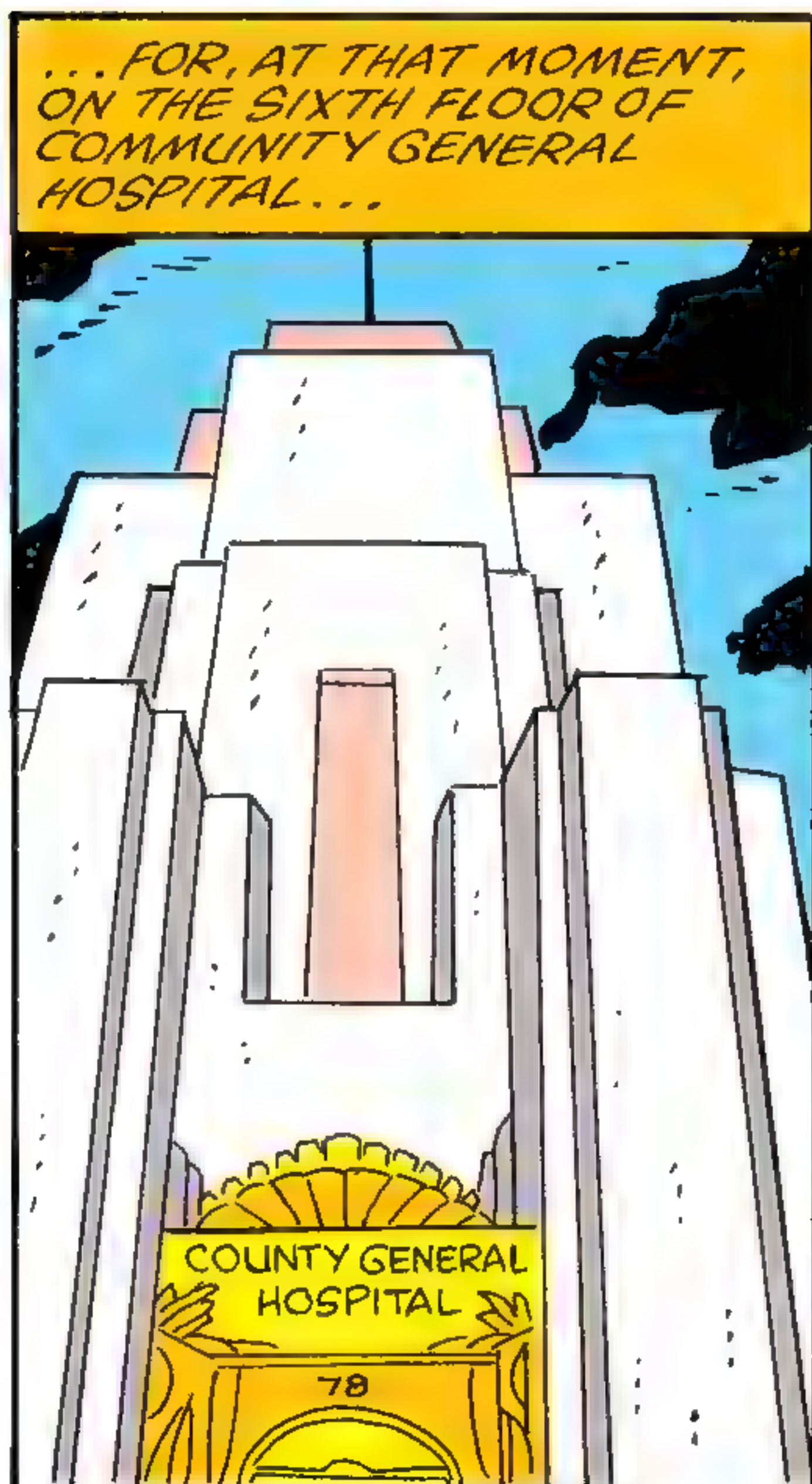
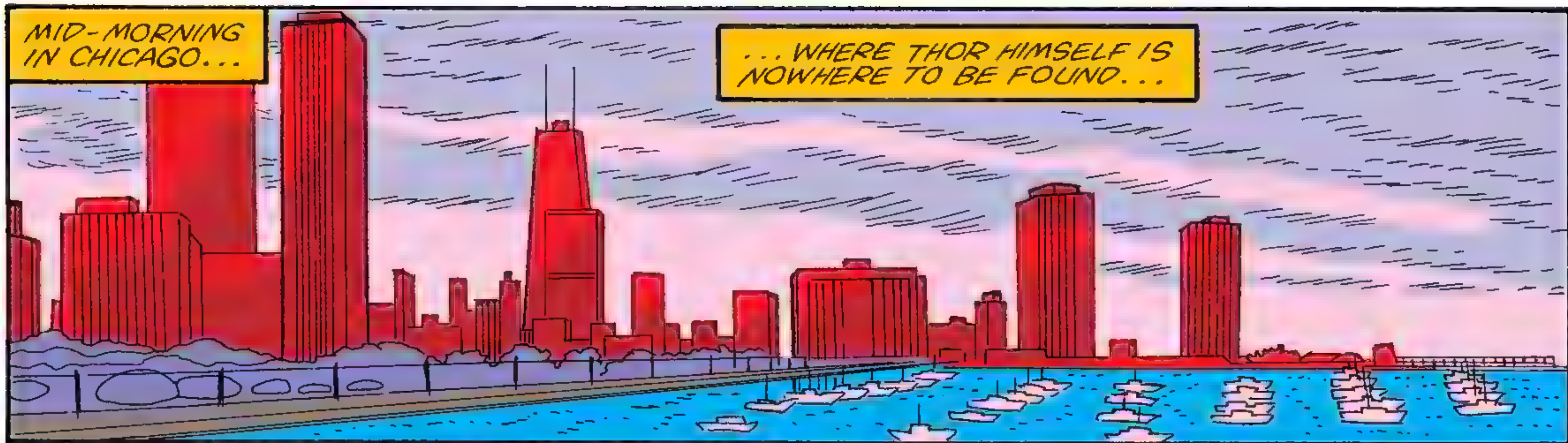
"... WHOSE HAMMER **MJOLNIR** IS MY LAST DESPERATE HOPE. FOR IT ALONE CAN RESTORE ME BEYOND THIS EARTHLY DIMENSION TO MY PROPER REALM OF **JOTUNHEIM** IN **ASGARD**, THERE TO RECOVER..."

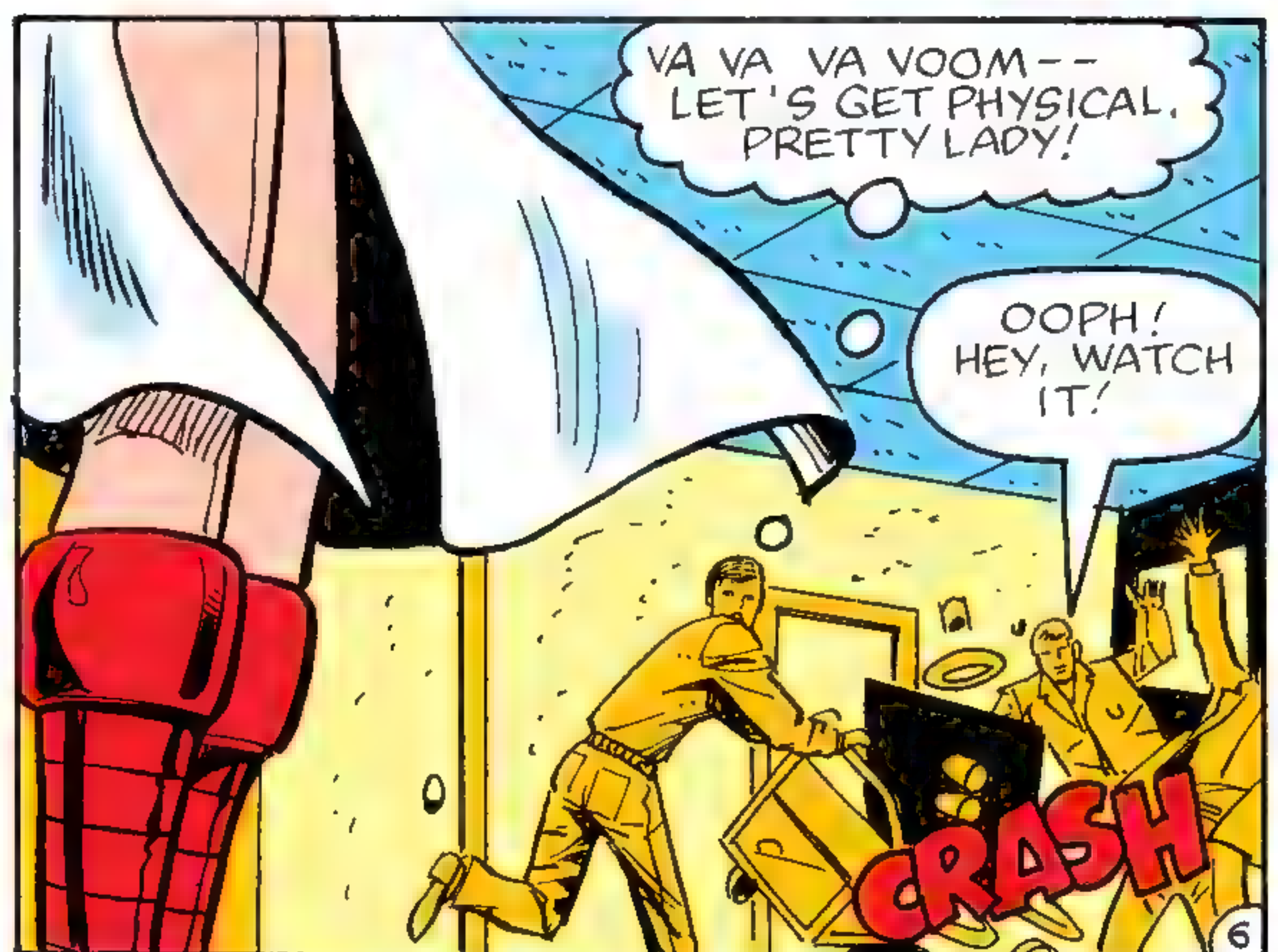
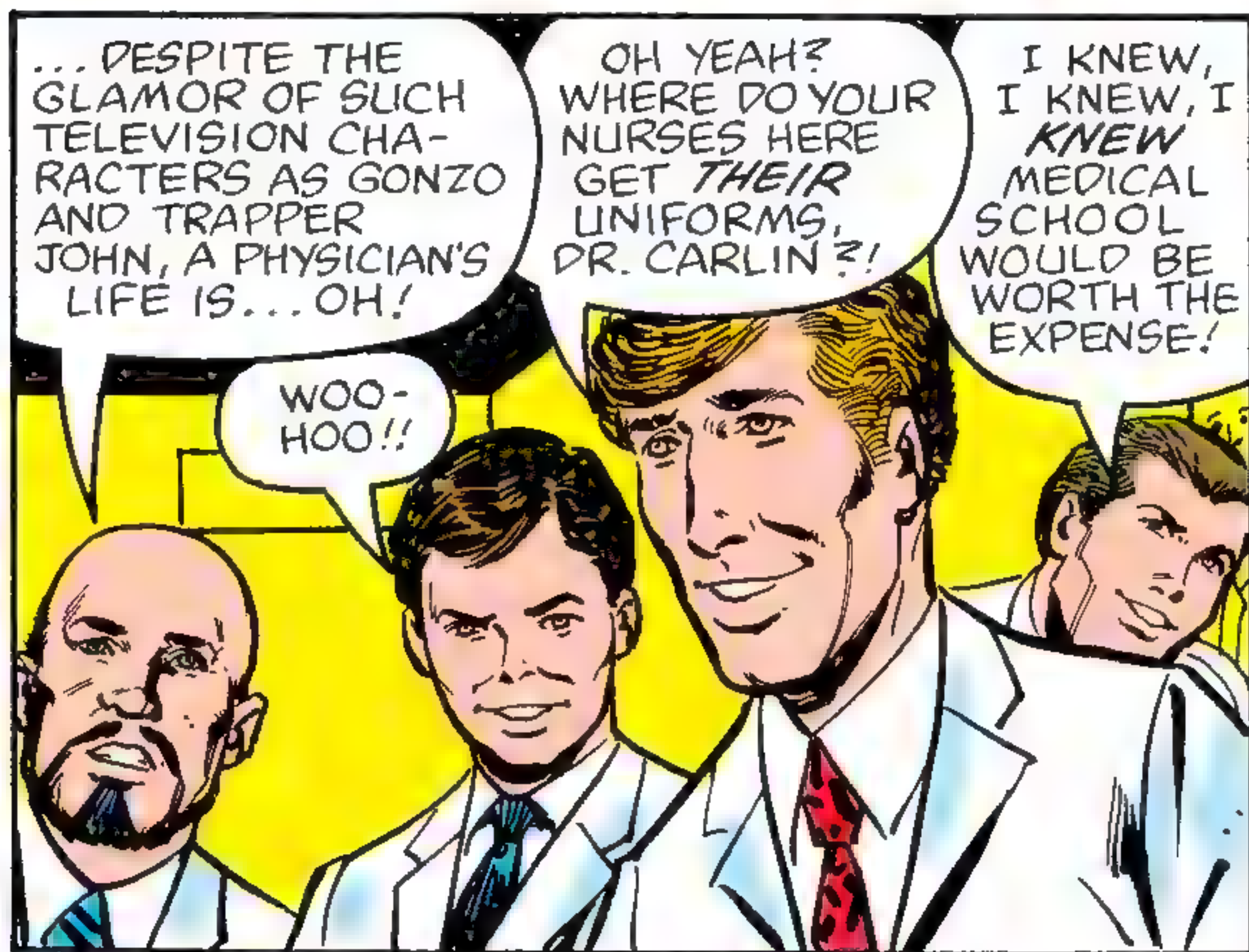
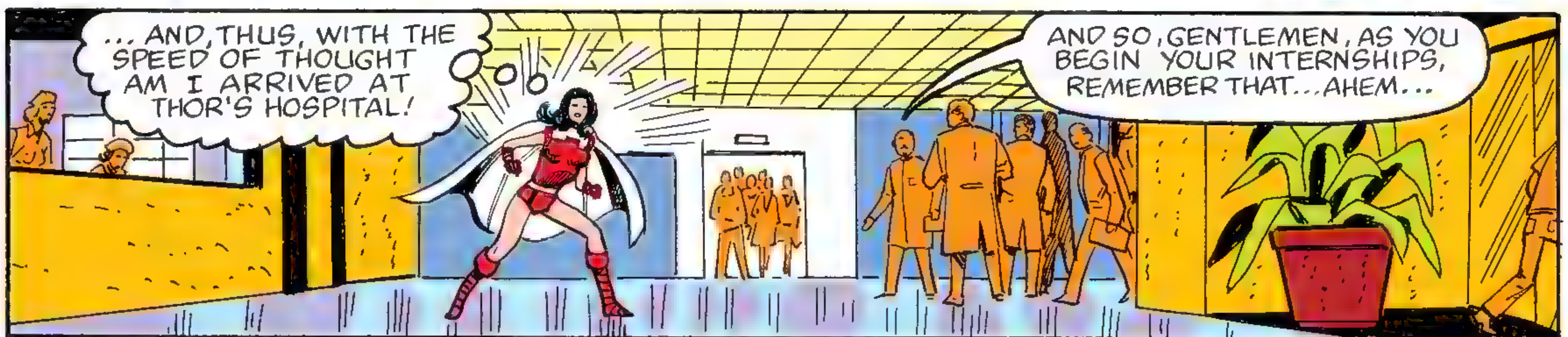
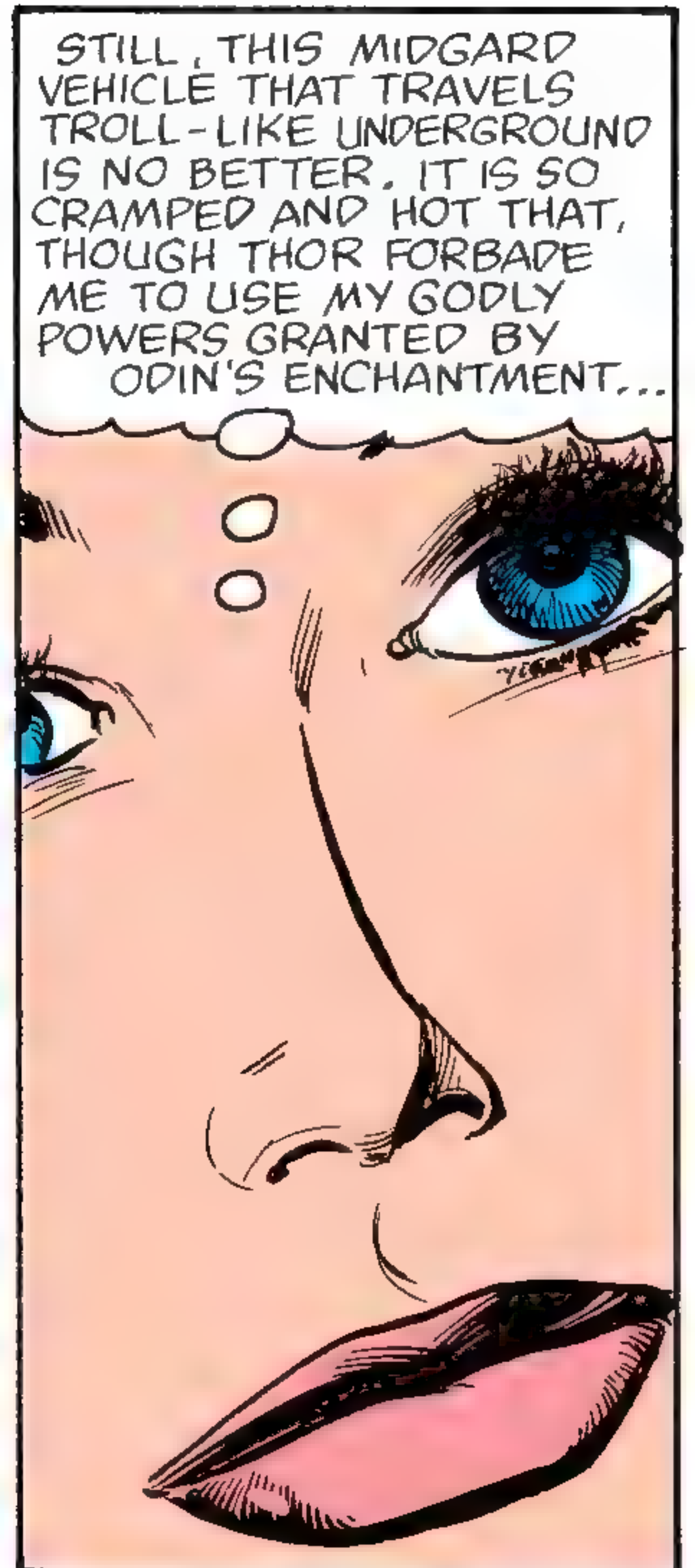
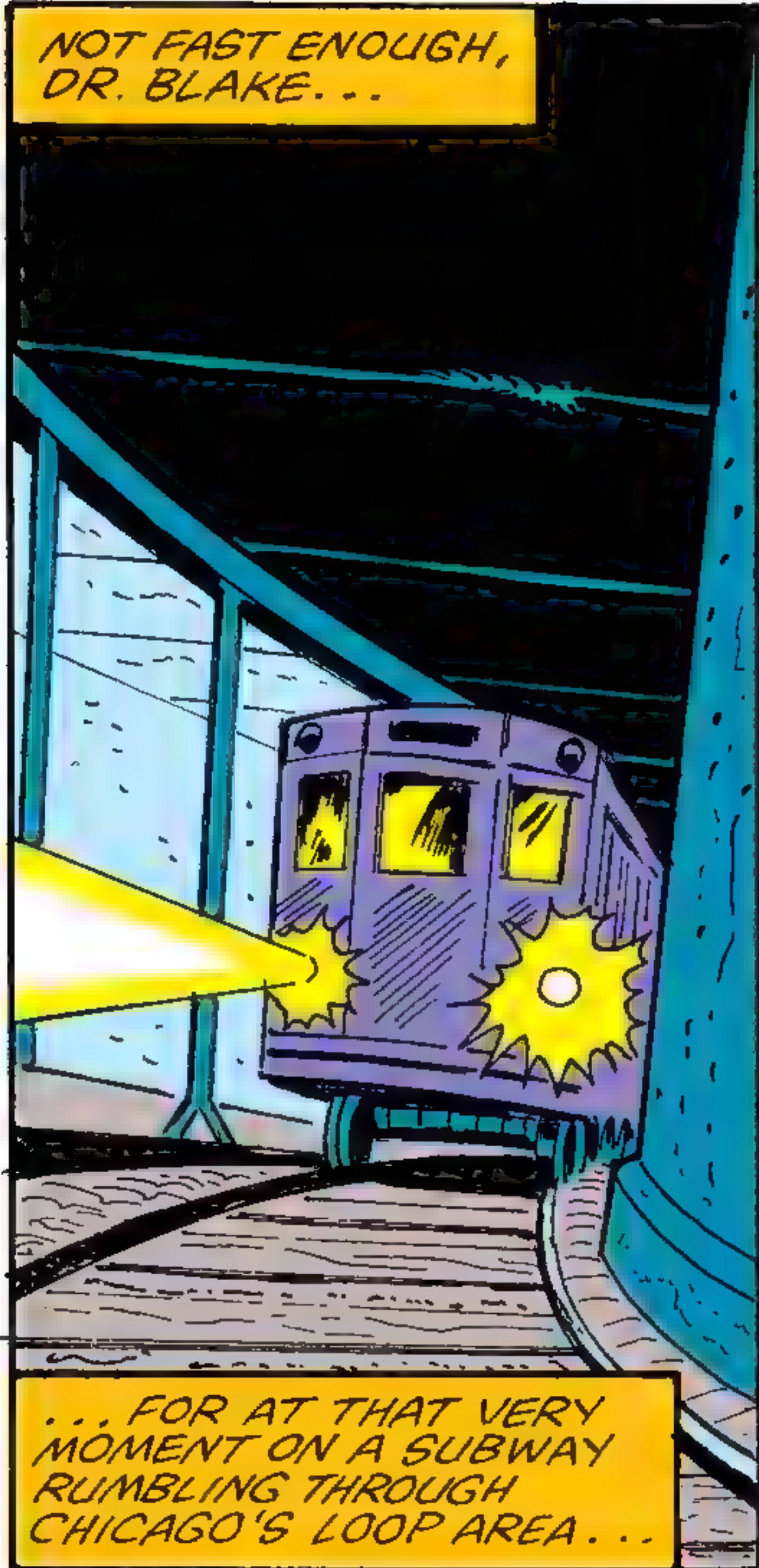
... OR BE BURIED BENEATH THE WALLS OF **UTGARD** AS BEFITS THE GREATEST OF THE STORM GIANTS.

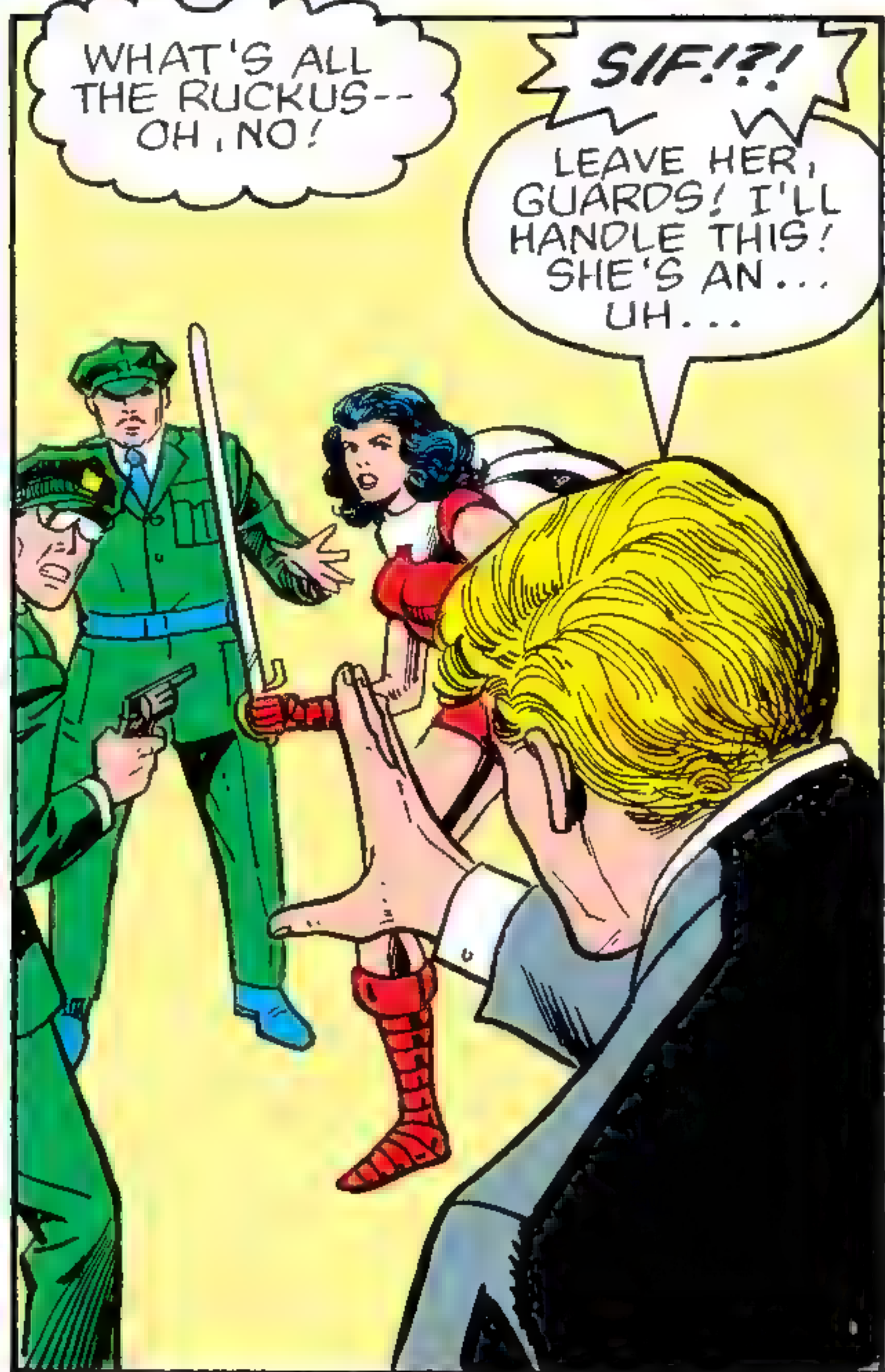
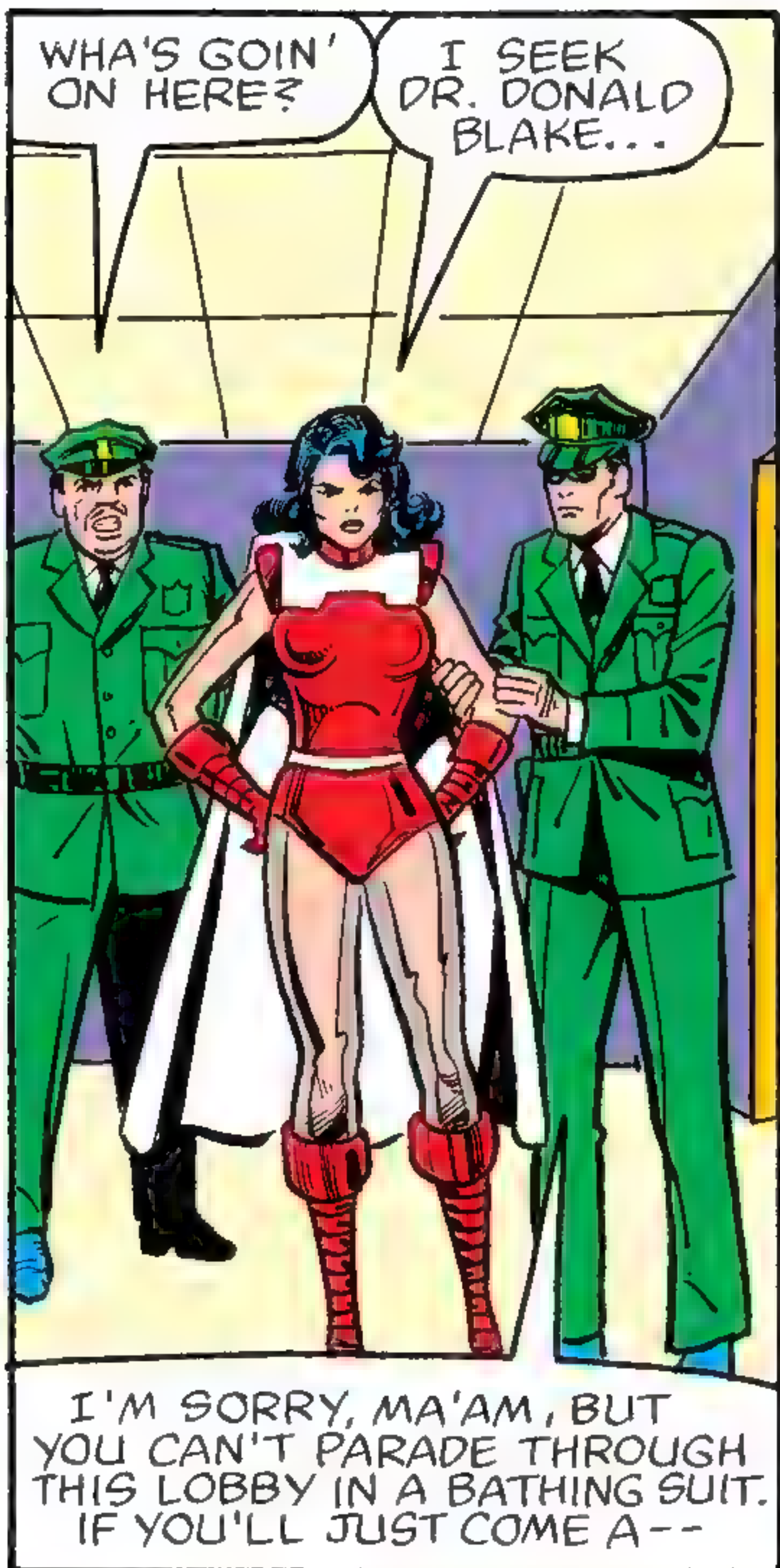


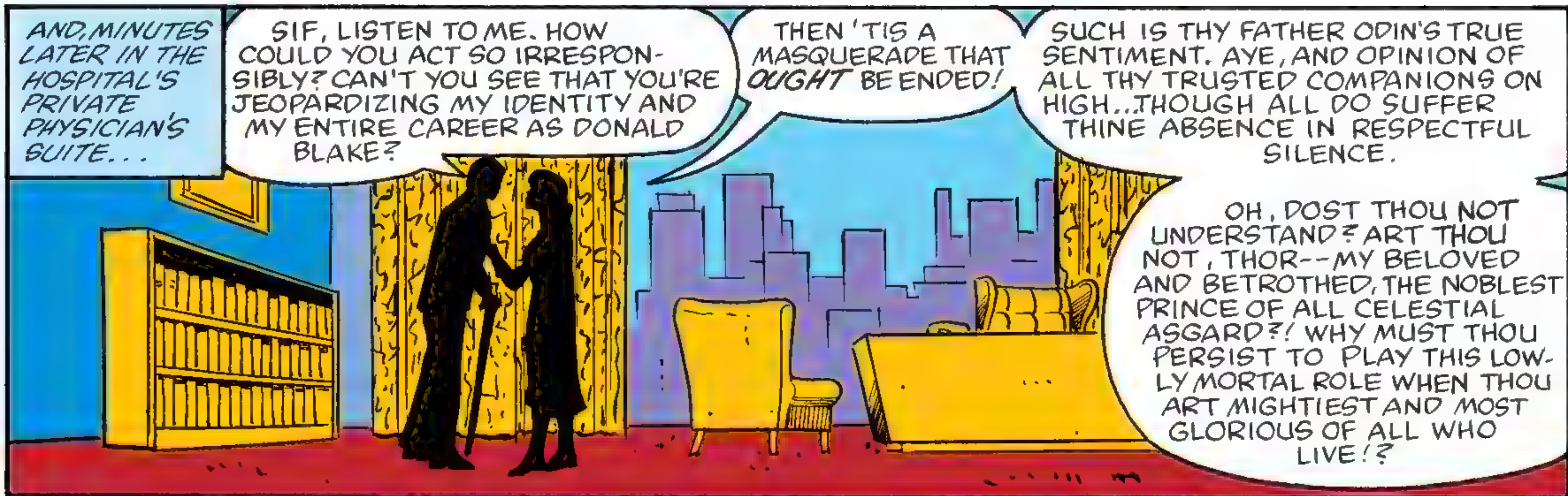












AND, MINUTES LATER IN THE HOSPITAL'S PRIVATE PHYSICIAN'S SUITE...

SIF, LISTEN TO ME. HOW COULD YOU ACT SO IRRESPONSIBLY? CAN'T YOU SEE THAT YOU'RE JEOPARDIZING MY IDENTITY AND MY ENTIRE CAREER AS DONALD BLAKE?

THEN 'TIS A MASQUERADE THAT OUGHT BE ENDED!

SUCH IS THY FATHER ODIN'S TRUE SENTIMENT. AYE, AND OPINION OF ALL THY TRUSTED COMPANIONS ON HIGH...THOUGH ALL DO SUFFER THINE ABSENCE IN RESPECTFUL SILENCE.

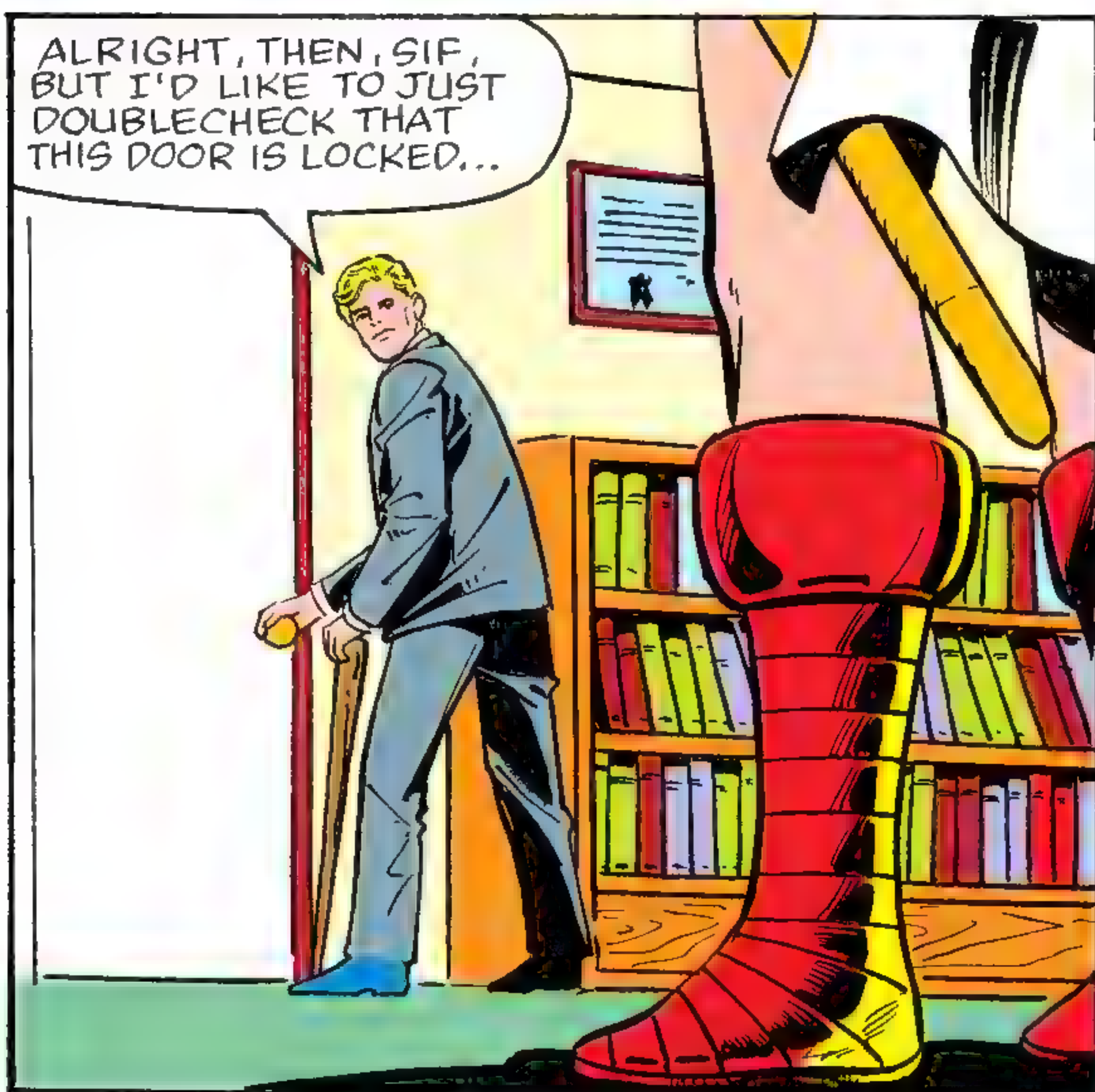
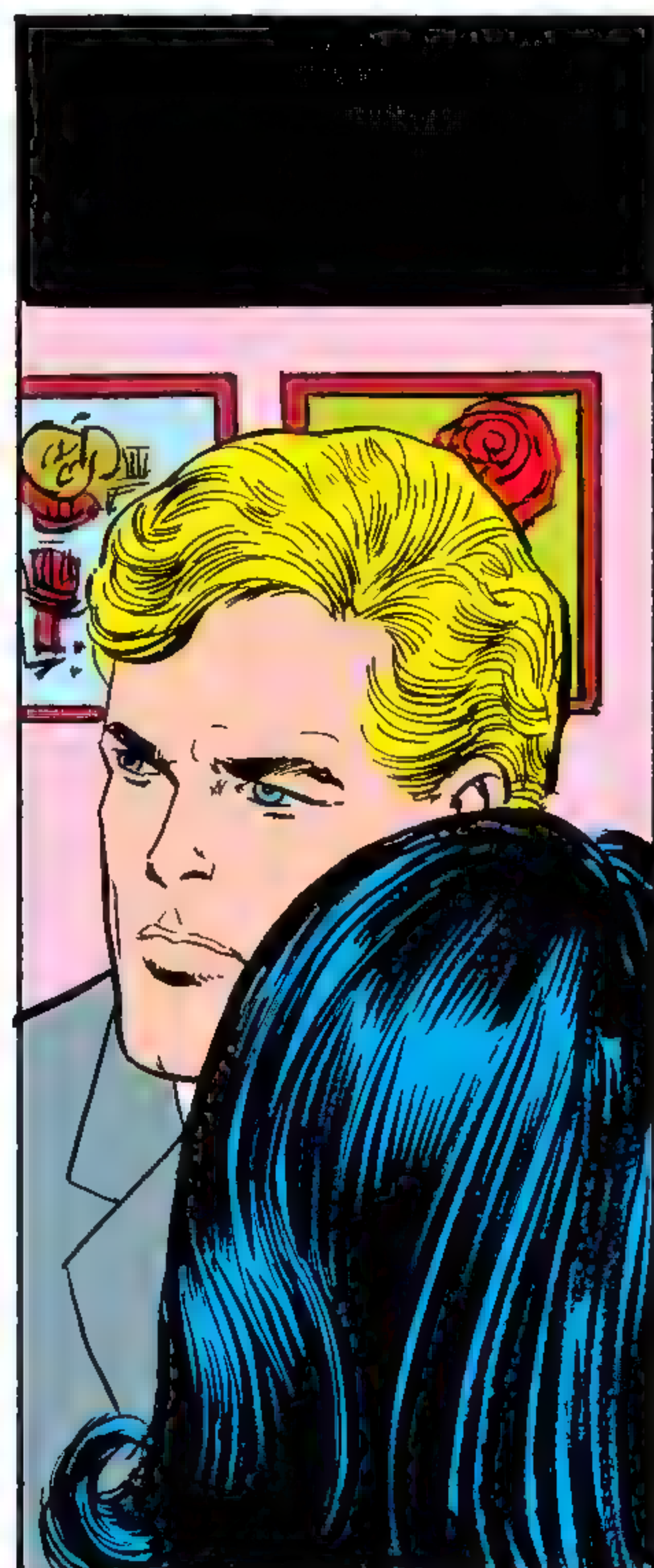
OH, DOST THOU NOT UNDERSTAND? ART THOU NOT, THOR--MY BELOVED AND BETROTHED, THE NOBLEST PRINCE OF ALL CELESTIAL ASSGARD?! WHY MUST THOU PERSIST TO PLAY THIS LOWLY MORTAL ROLE WHEN THOU ART MIGHTIEST AND MOST GLORIOUS OF ALL WHO LIVE!?



I REMAINED ON MIDGARD TO BE WITH MY TRUE LOVE, BUT HALF THY WAKING HOURS THOU DOST WEAR HUMAN GUISE TO LEAD A TIRESOME LIFE I COULD NEVER SHARE.



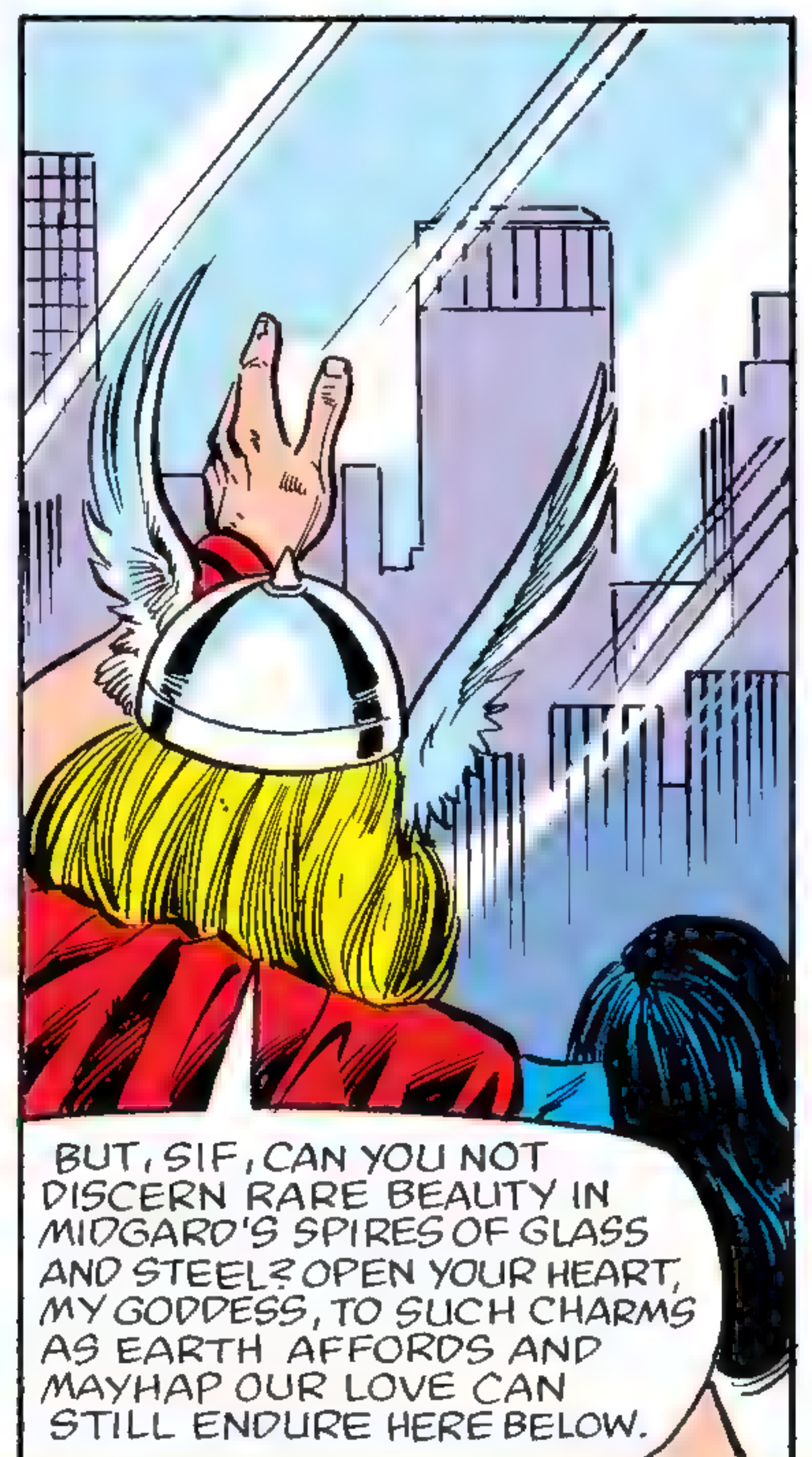
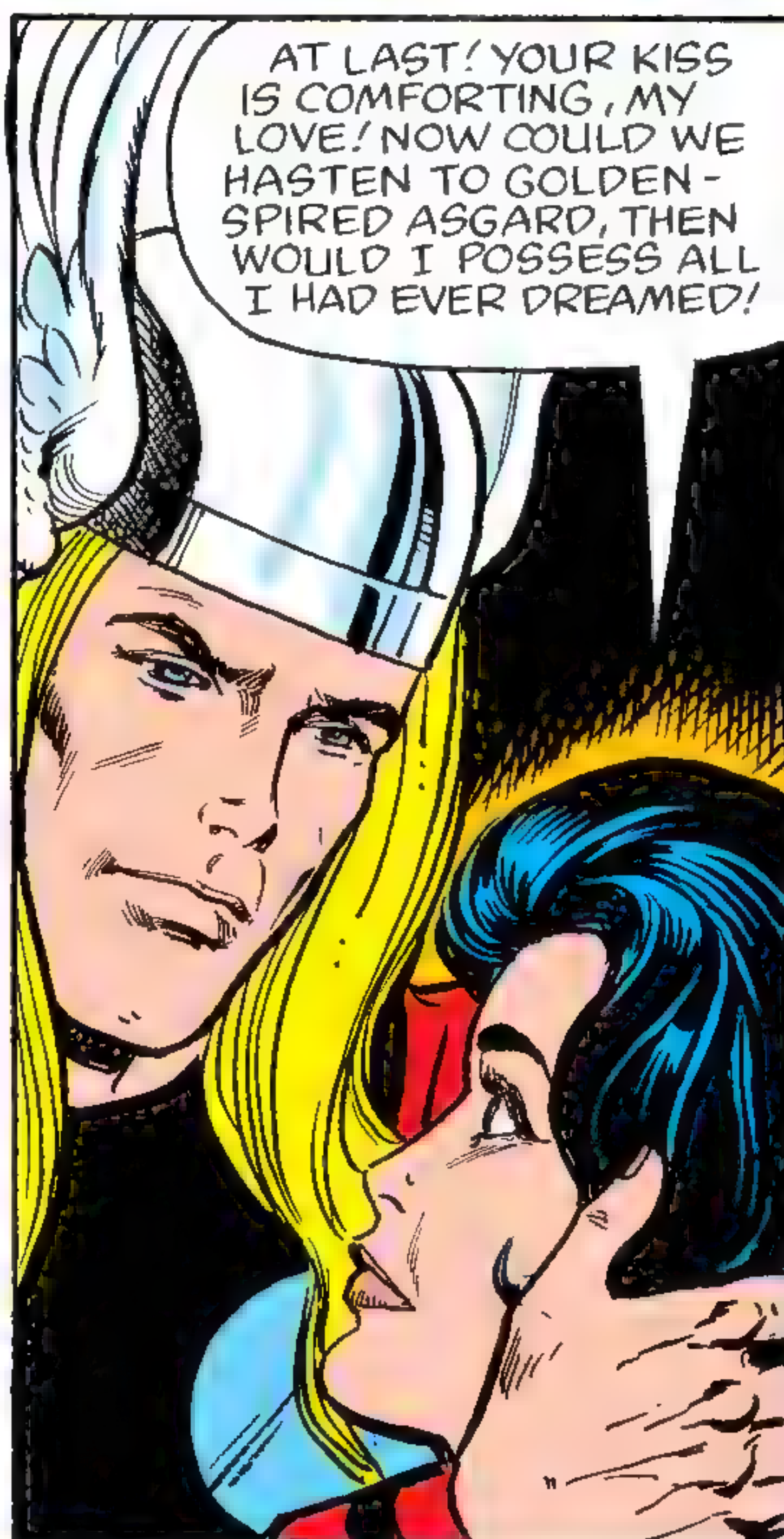
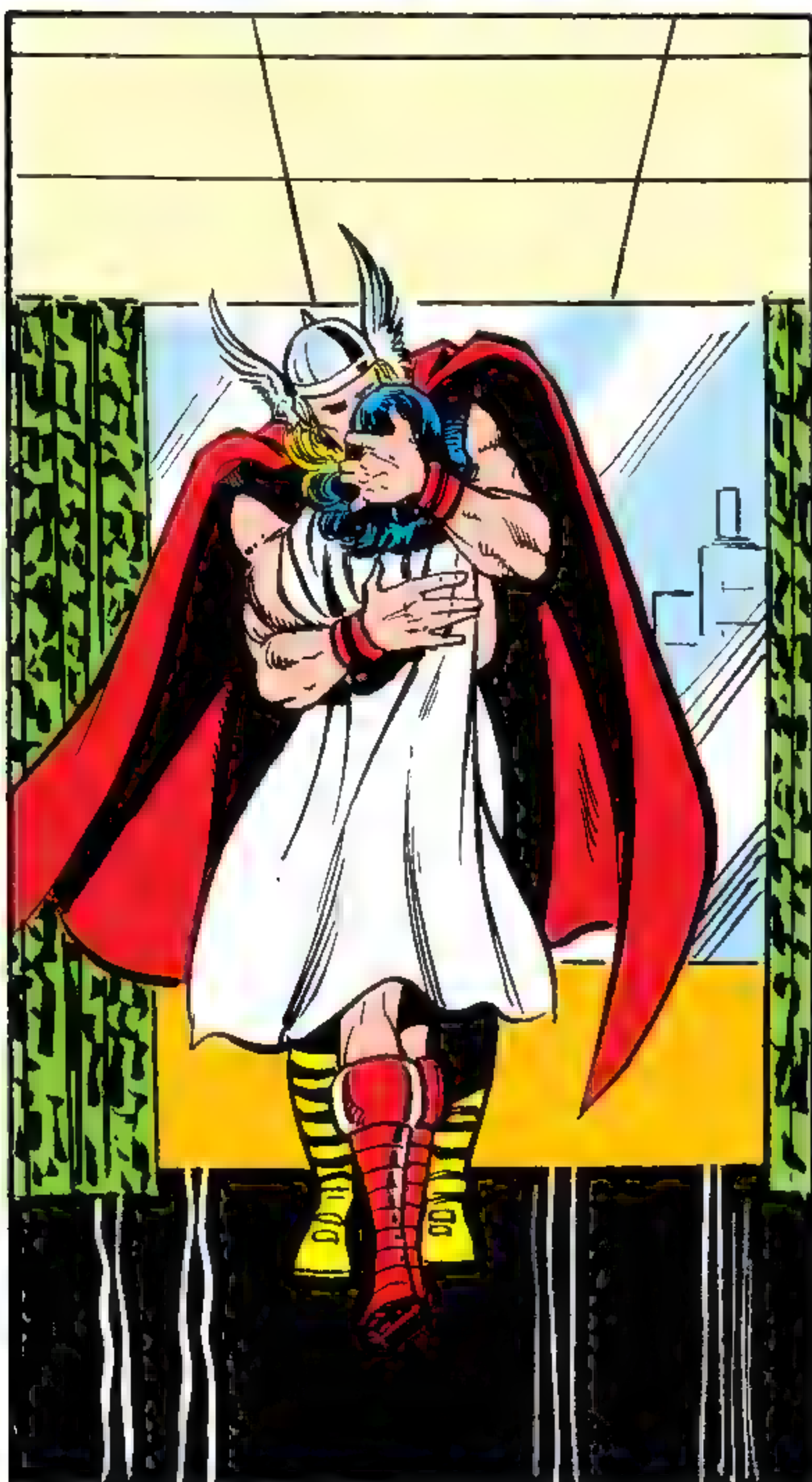
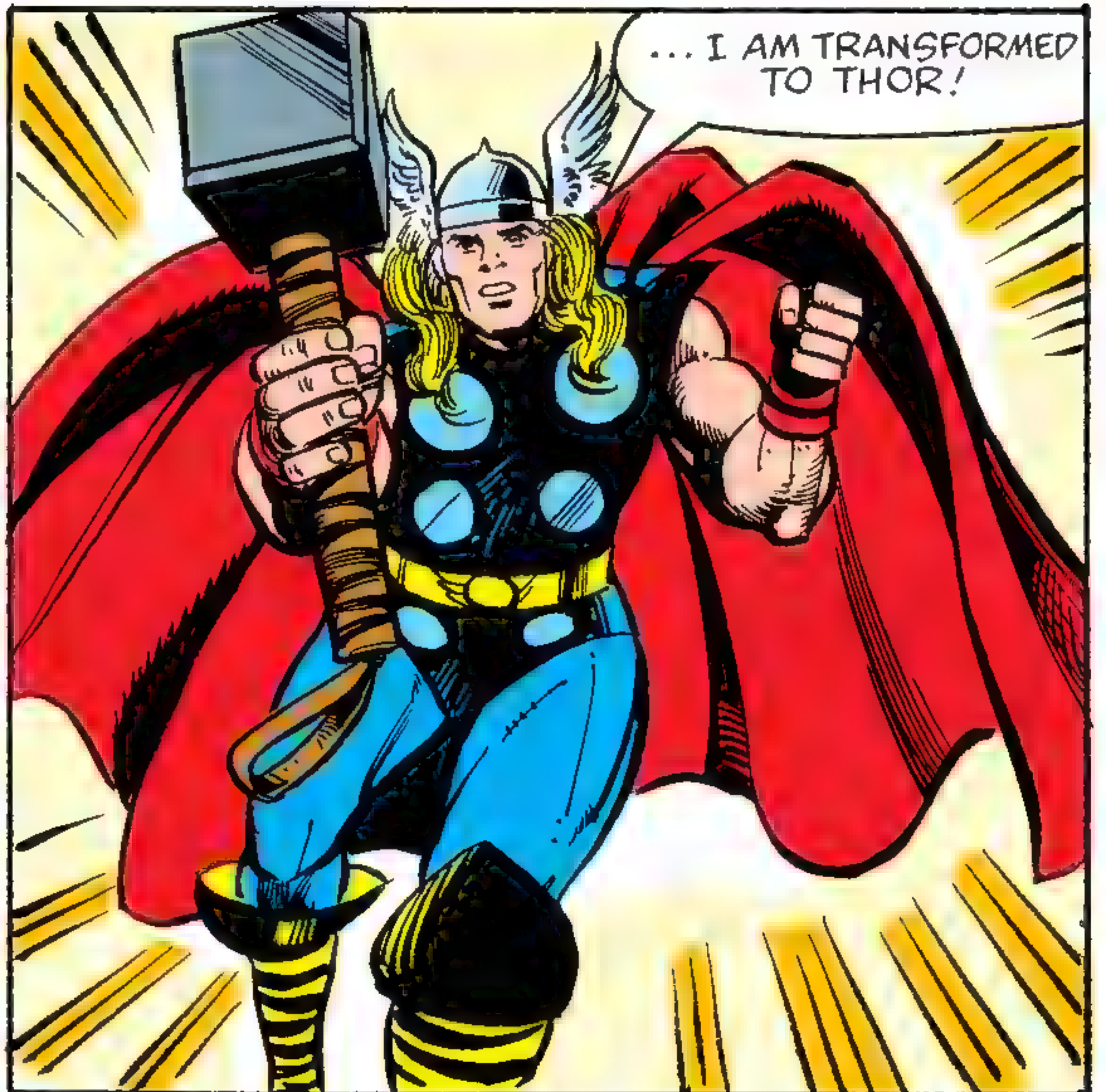
NO! IT IS NOT DONALD BLAKE I LOVE, BUT GALLANT THOR! WHERE IS MY BELOVED?



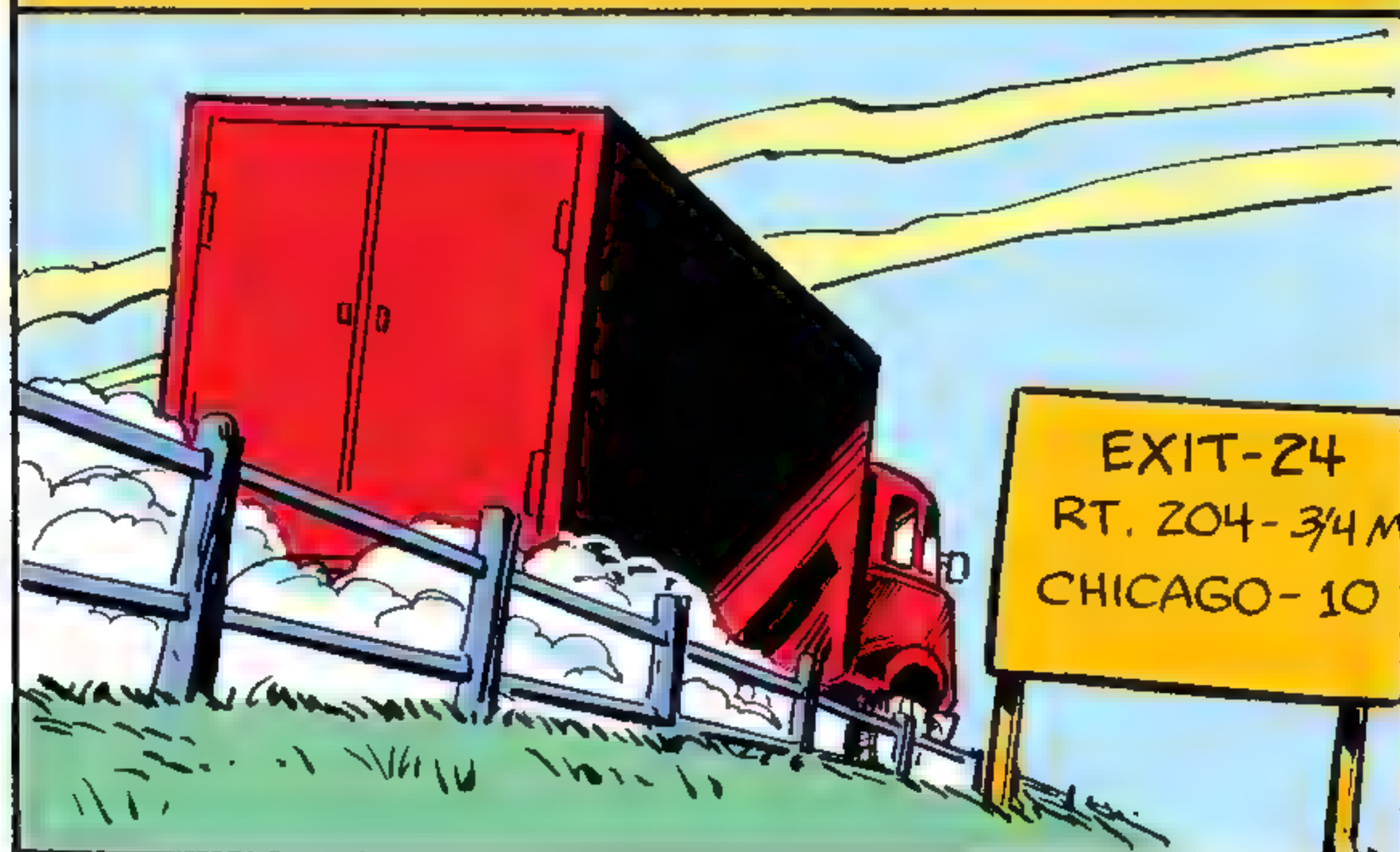
ALRIGHT, THEN, SIF, BUT I'D LIKE TO JUST DOUBLECHECK THAT THIS DOOR IS LOCKED...



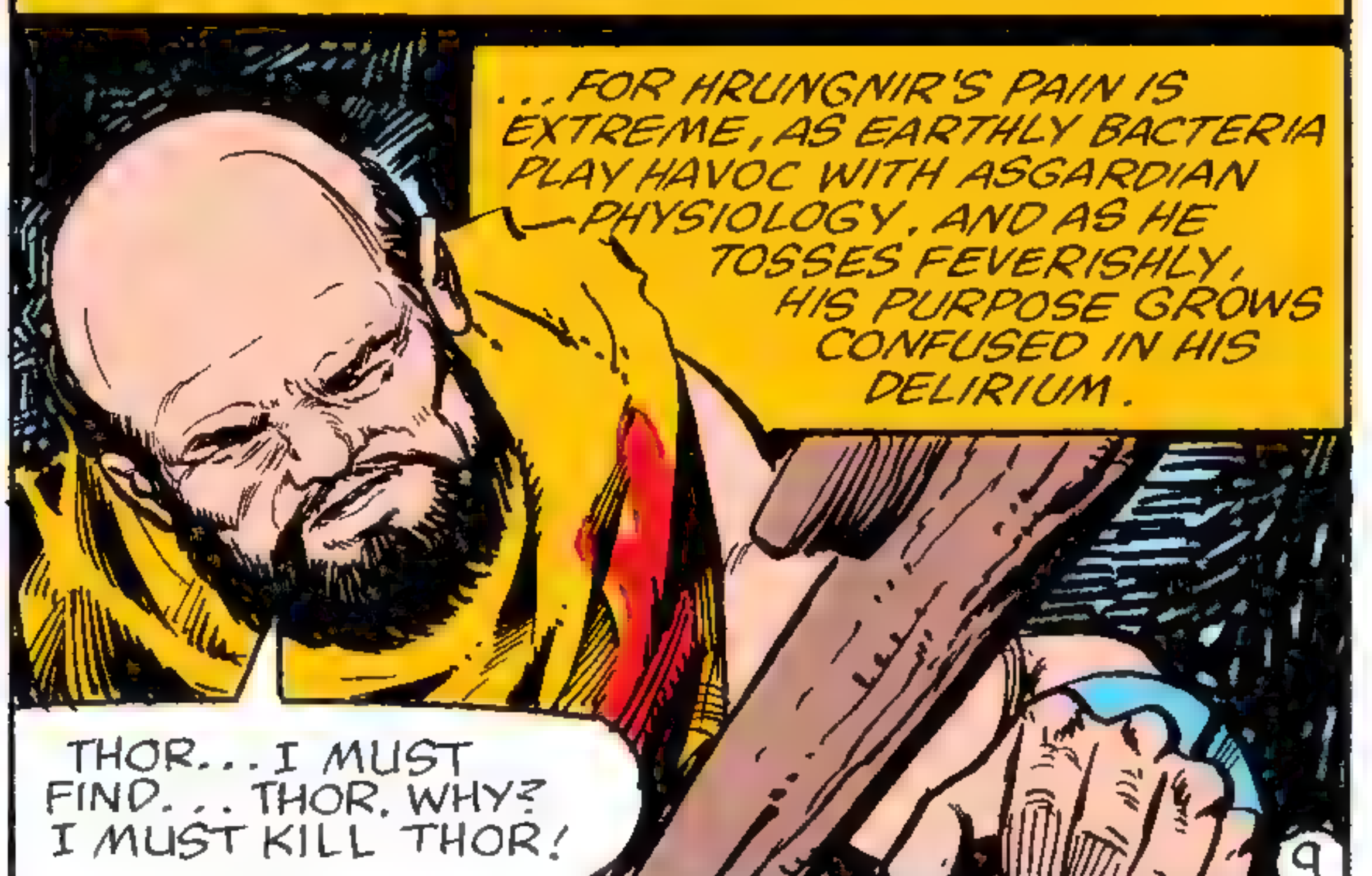
...AND THEN, BY STAMPING MY CANE ONCE...



ELSEWHERE, ON ROUTE FROM THE EASTERN SEABOARD, A STARK INTERNATIONAL TRAILER TRUCK ROARS DOWN THE TURNPIKE...



... ITS CARGO, A WOUNDED GIANT, OBLIVIOUS TO THE CLATTERING AND BACKFIRING OF THE RIG...



LATER THAT AFTERNOON, ON FASHIONABLE MICHIGAN AVENUE WHERE DONALD BLAKE MAINTAINS HIS APARTMENT AND PRIVATE PRACTICE...



HA! I OWE ONE TO THE HOSPITAL LAUNDRY CLERK, BUT YOU CERTAINLY MAKE THE PRETTIEST NURSE I'VE EVER SEEN, SIF. STILL, YOU'VE GOT TO GET YOURSELF SOME REAL CLOTHING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



YET REMEMBER--I HAVE PROMISED NOUGHT BUT AN ATTEMPT TO ADJUST TO MIDGARD, AND FOR THE TIME BEING ALONE.

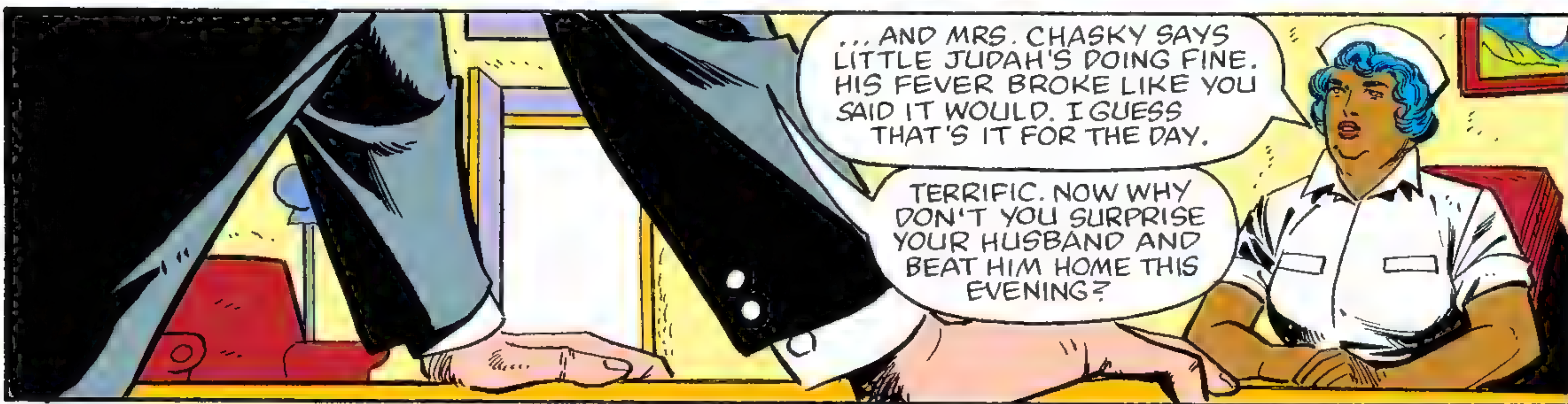
I'LL REMEMBER.

HERE'S THE KEY. WHY DON'T YOU LET YOURSELF INTO THE APARTMENT WHILE I CHECK IN WITH THE OFFICE?



... AND MRS. CHASKY SAYS LITTLE JUDAH'S DOING FINE. HIS FEVER BROKE LIKE YOU SAID IT WOULD. I GUESS THAT'S IT FOR THE DAY.

TERRIFIC. NOW WHY DON'T YOU SURPRISE YOUR HUSBAND AND BEAT HIM HOME THIS EVENING?



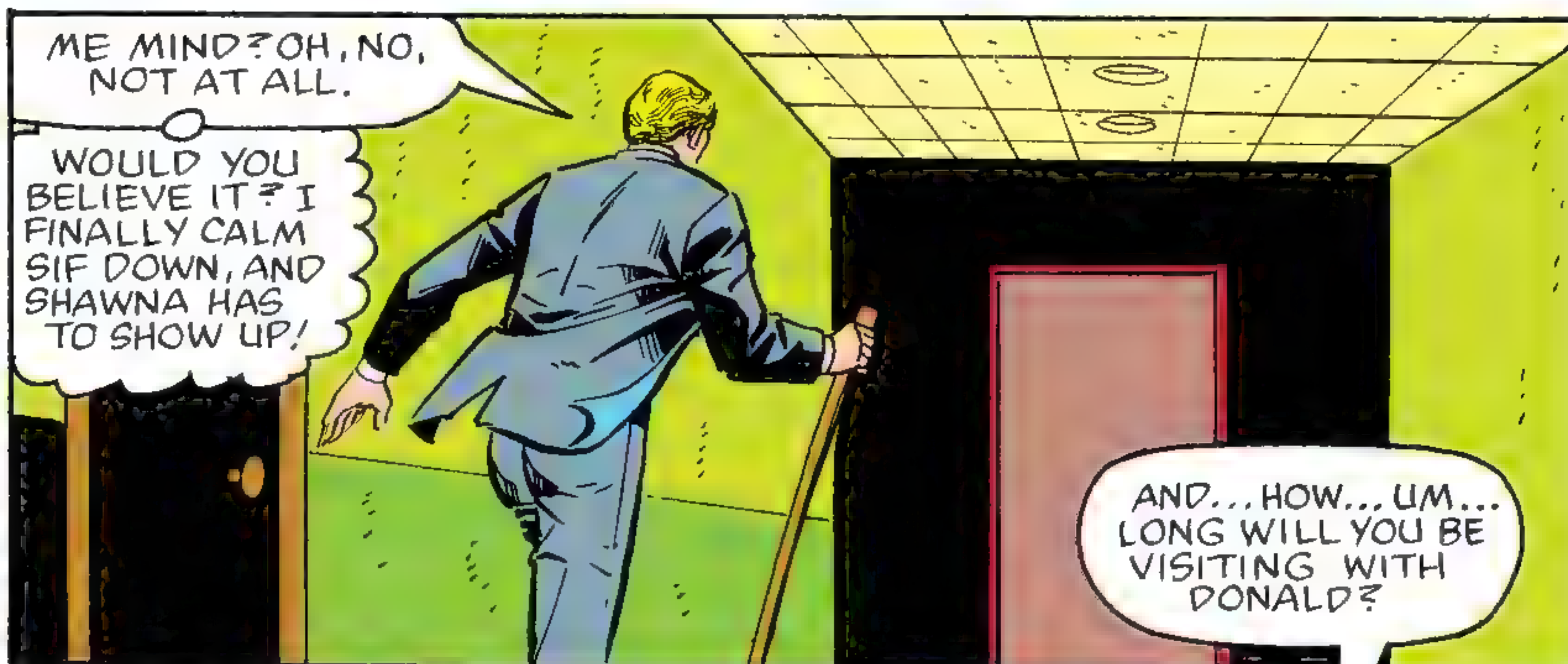
OH-- JUST ONE THING BEFORE YOU GO, NURSE STEVENS. COULD YOU PLEASE CALL DR. LYNDE AND TELL HER I'M REALLY SORRY, BUT I WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP OUR DINNER APPOINTMENT BECAUSE--



HOW SILLY OF ME! DR. LYNDE IS WAITING IN YOUR APARTMENT. SINCE THE TWO OF YOU HAVE BEEN, WELL, KEEPING COMPANY, I ASSUMED YOU WOULDN'T MIND IF I LET HER IN.

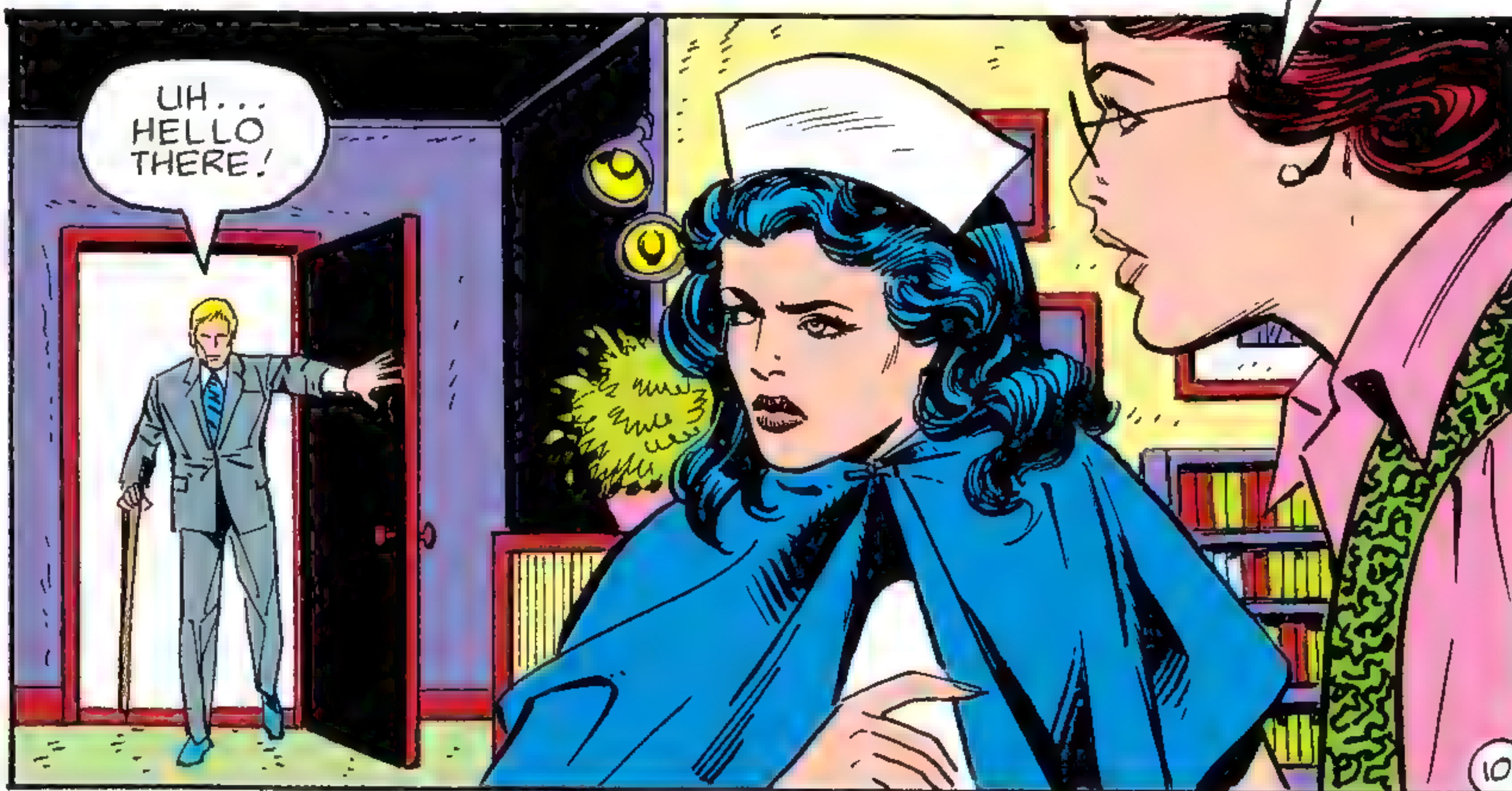
ME MIND? OH, NO, NOT AT ALL.

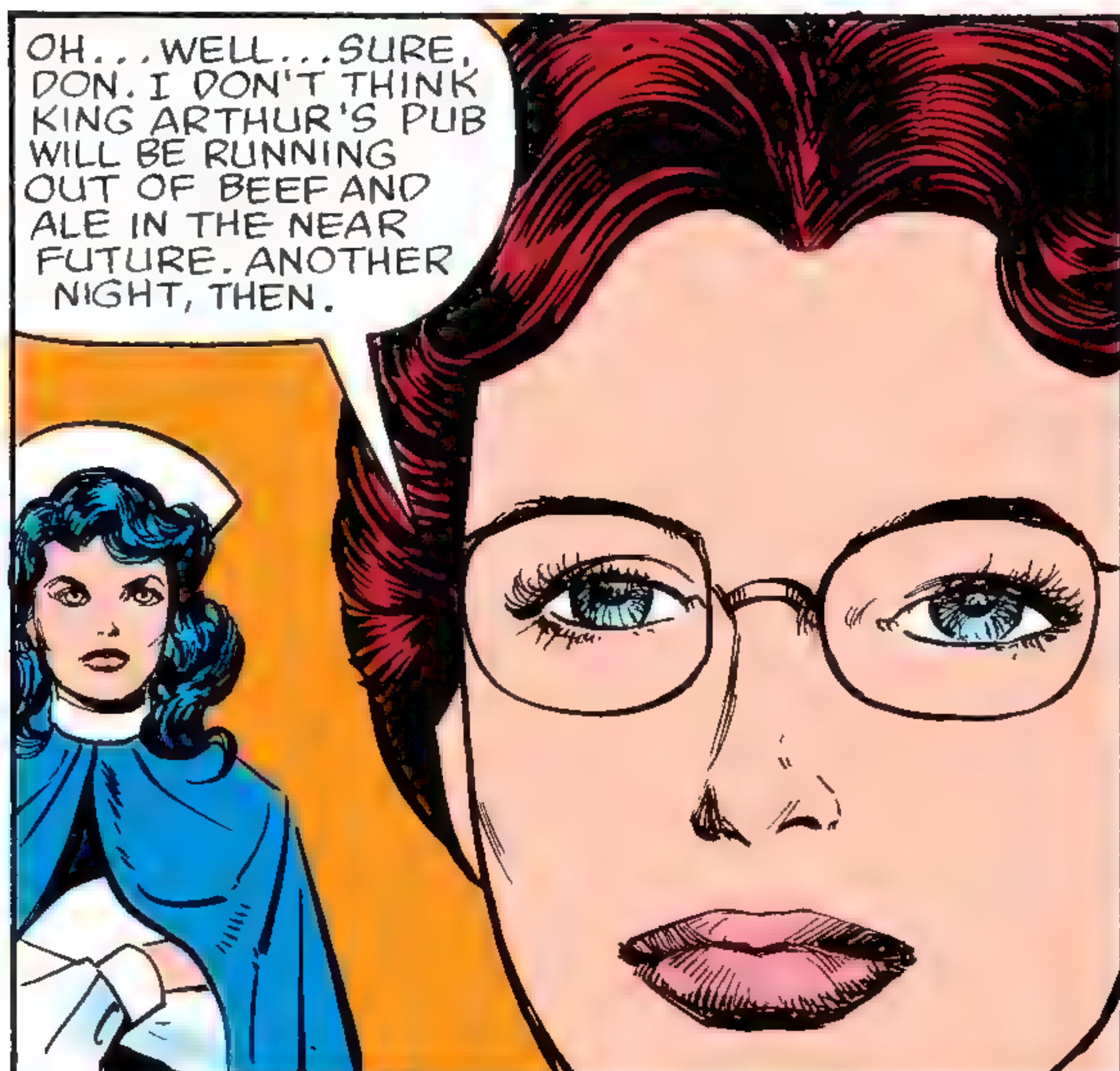
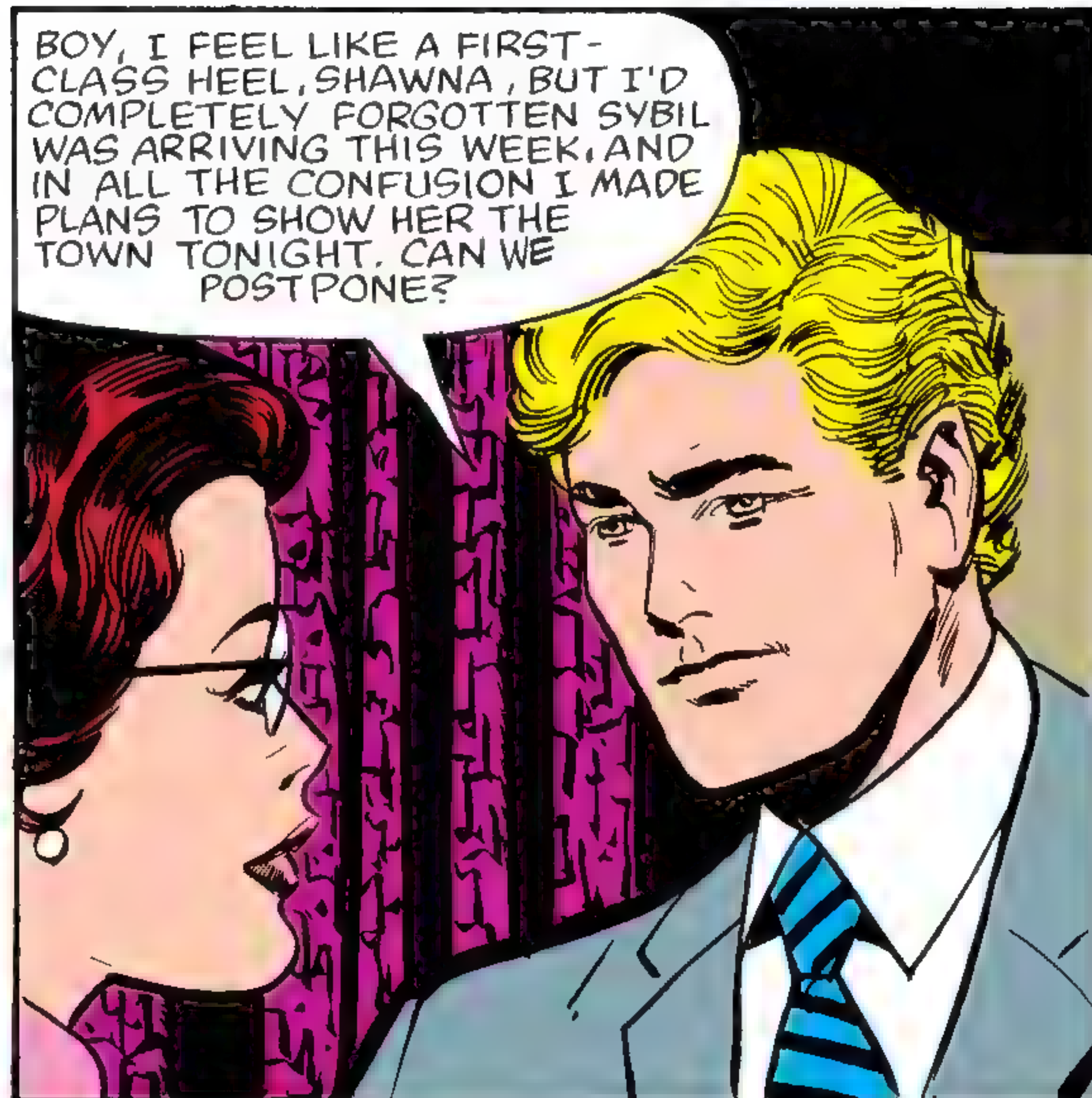
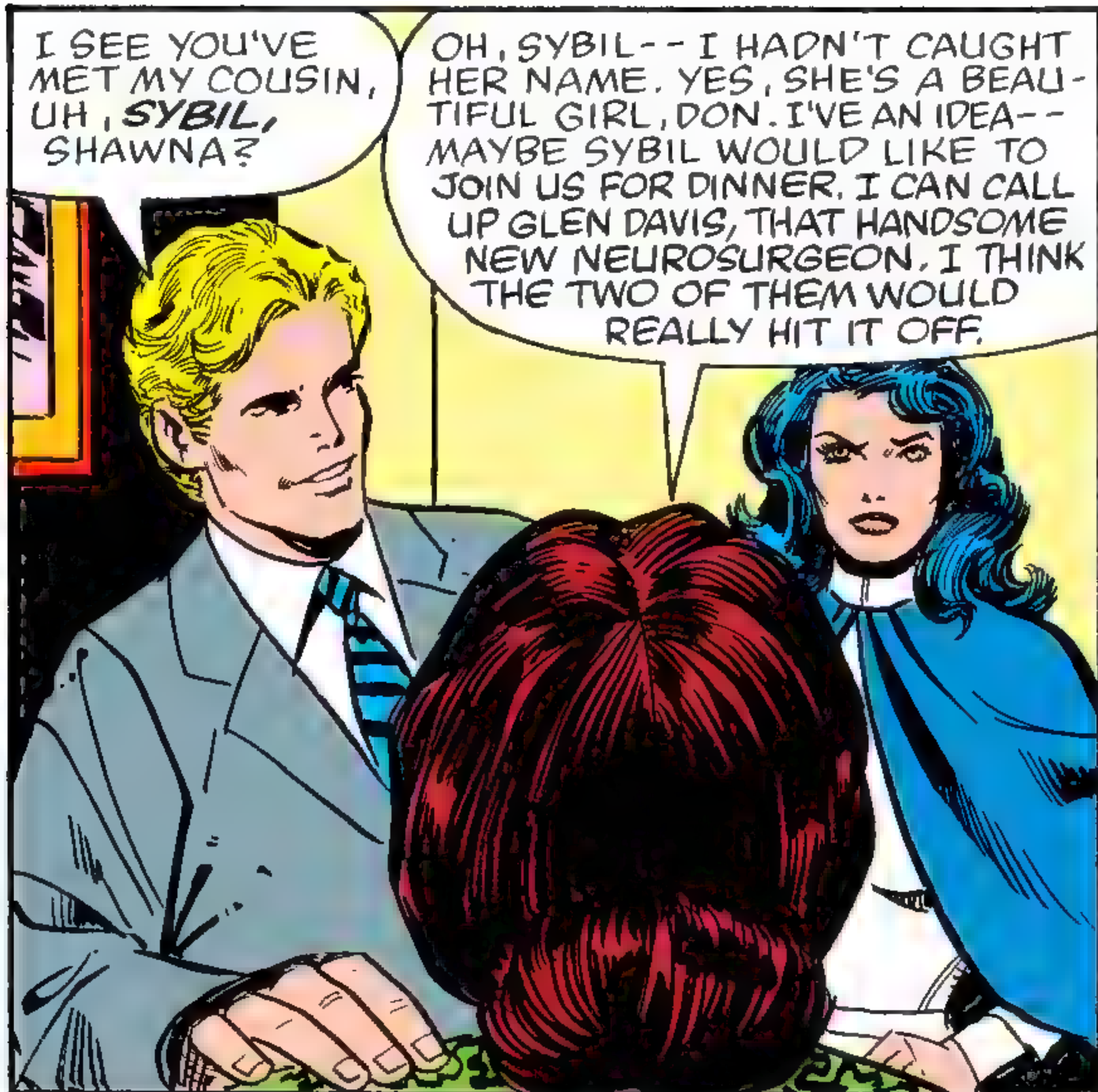
WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? I FINALLY CALM SIF DOWN, AND SHAWNA HAS TO SHOW UP!



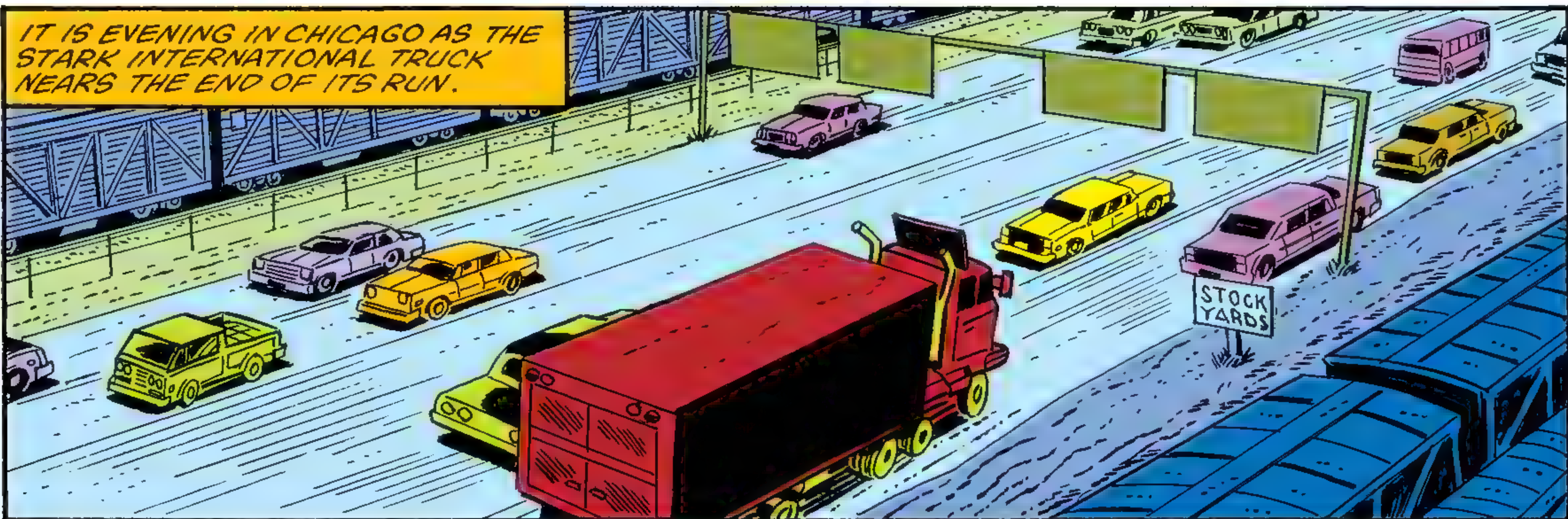
AND... HOW... UM... LONG WILL YOU BE VISITING WITH DONALD?

UH... HELLO THERE!





IT IS EVENING IN CHICAGO AS THE STARK INTERNATIONAL TRUCK NEARS THE END OF ITS RUN.



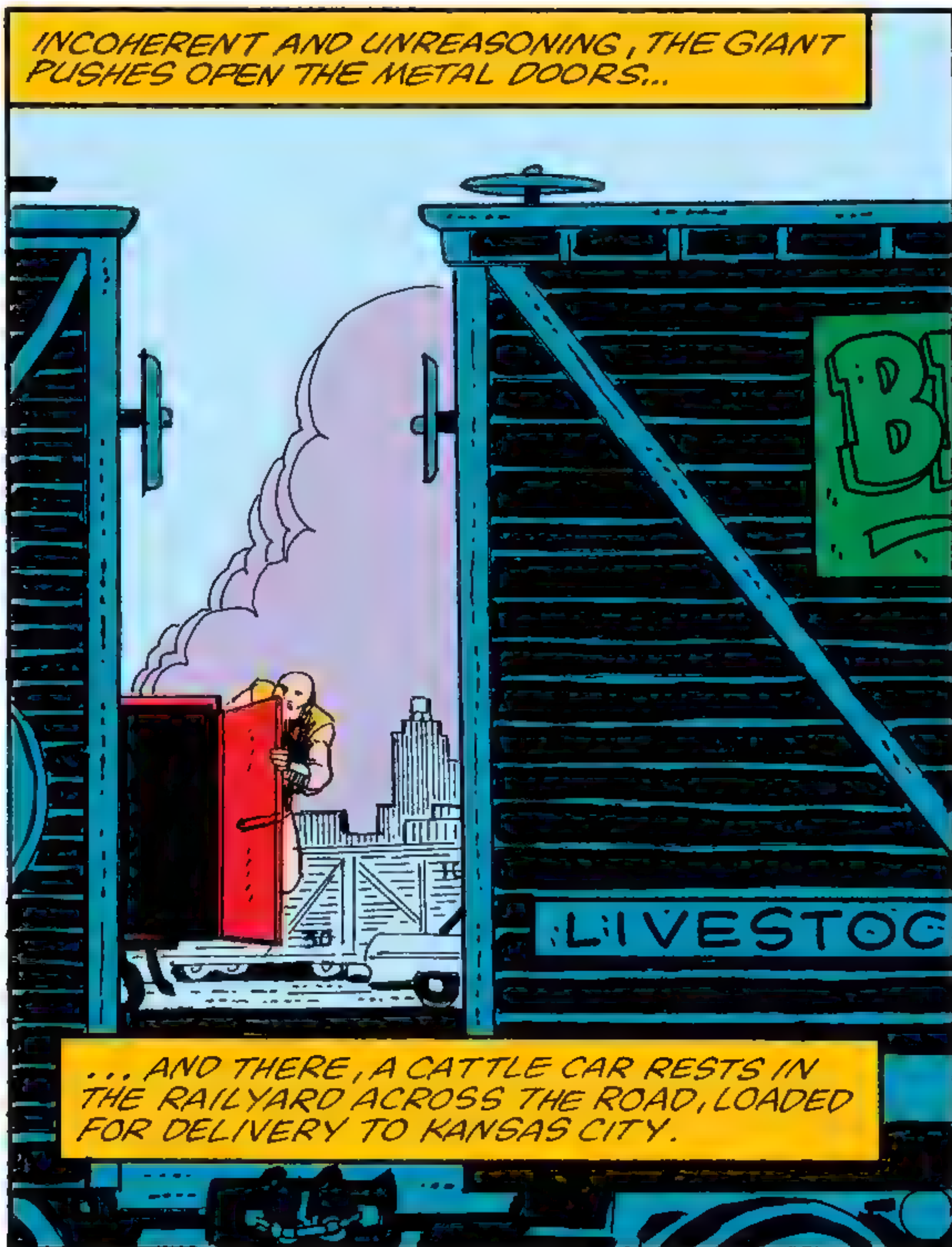
IN THE TRAILER, THOUGH HRUNGNIIR'S BODY BURNS WITH FEVER AND HIS BRAIN THROBS WITH PAIN HE RESPONDS TO AN ANIMAL SCENT IN THE AIR. AND NOW AN AWESOME HUNGER THAT ONLY A GIANT MIGHT KNOW OVERWHELMS HIM.

I FAMISH! I MUST EAT... THEN FIND THOR AND... KILL HIM!

SNIF! SNIF!

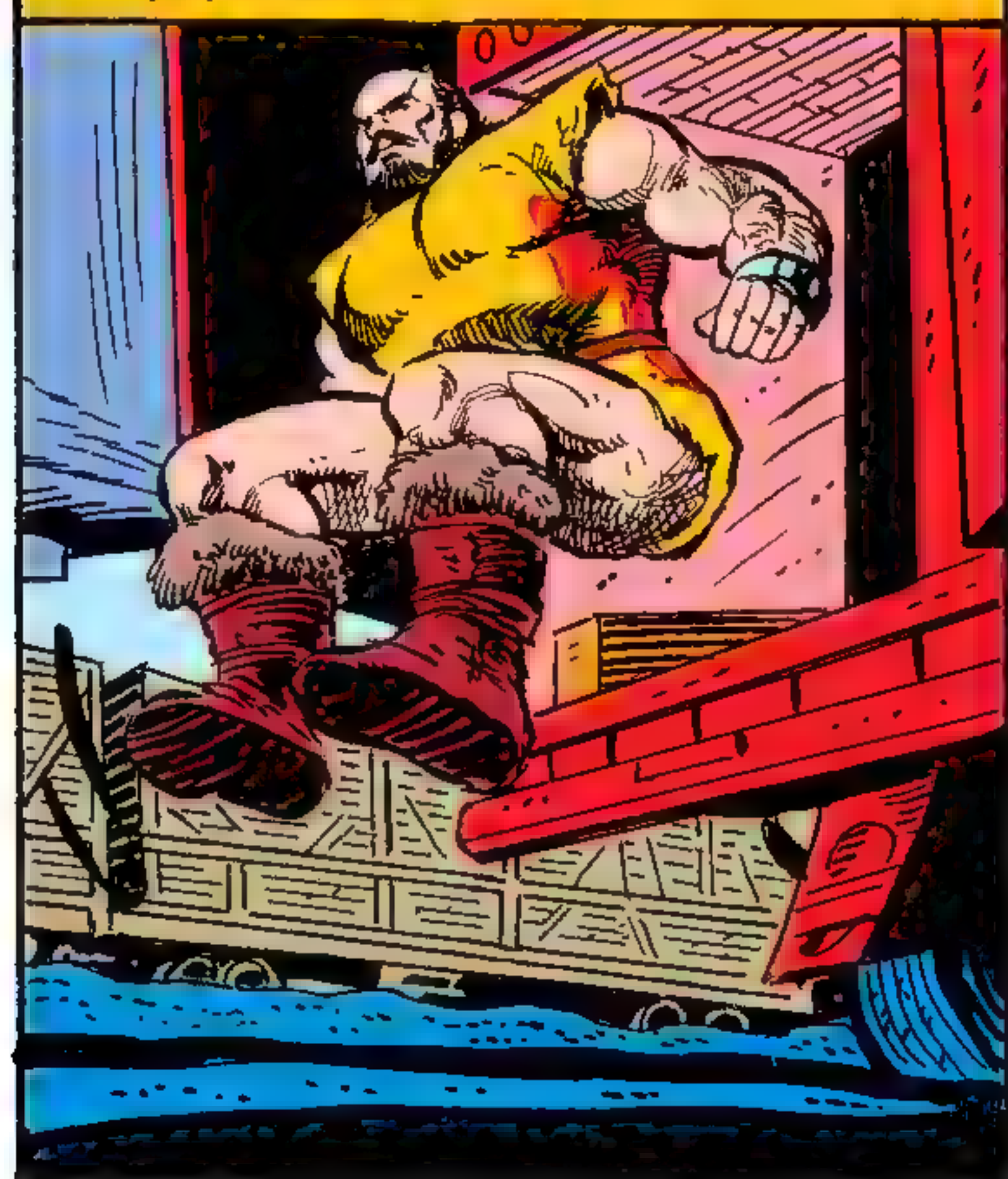


INCOHERENT AND UNREASONING, THE GIANT PUSHES OPEN THE METAL DOORS...

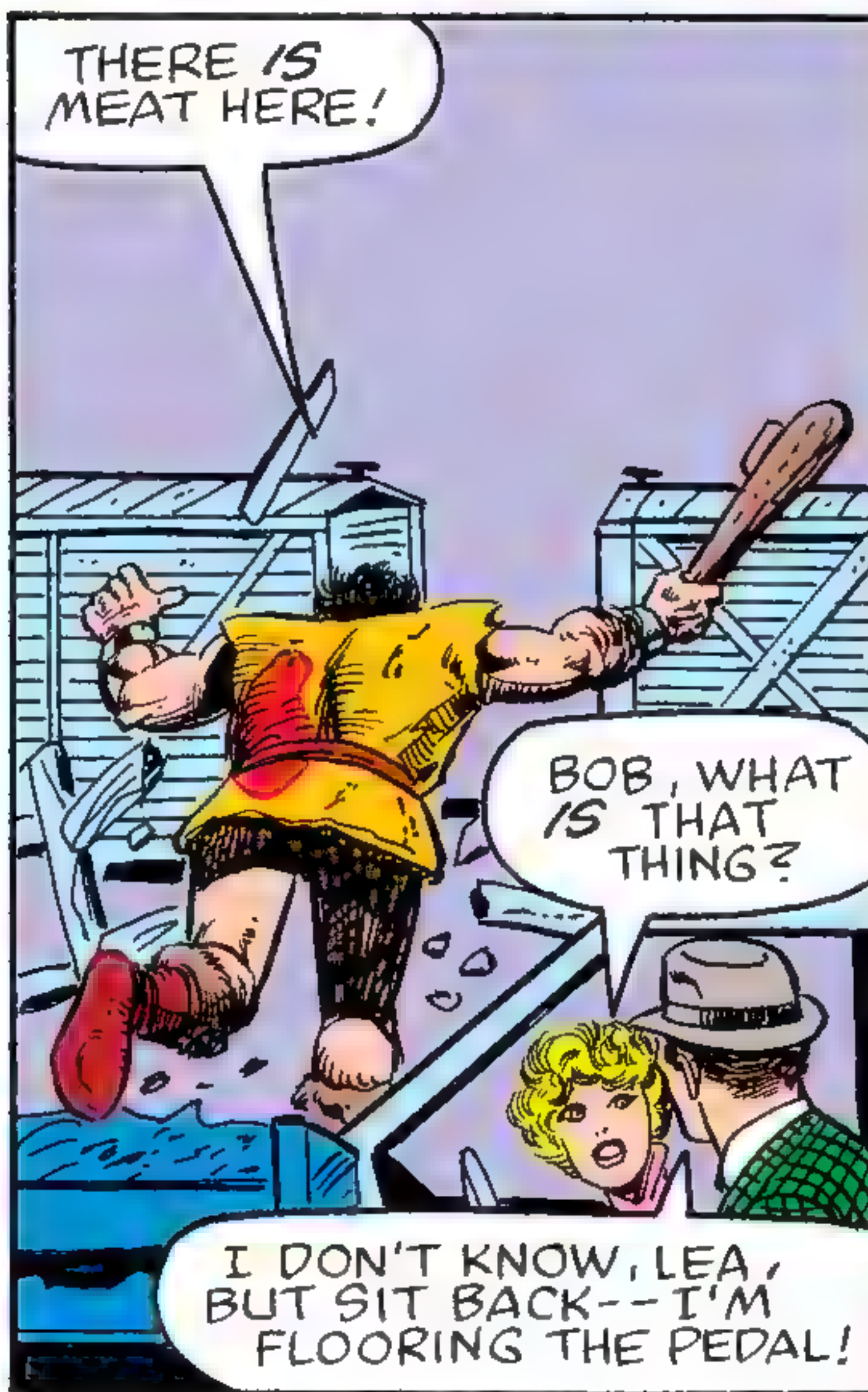


... AND THERE, A CATTLE CAR RESTS IN THE RAILYARD ACROSS THE ROAD, LOADED FOR DELIVERY TO KANSAS CITY.

NUMBED NOW TO HIS PAIN, HRUNGNIIR LEAPS FROM THE MOVING VEHICLE WITH THE DESPERATE STRENGTH OF DELIRIOUSNESS AND THE FRENZY OF A WILD MAN.



THERE IS MEAT HERE!

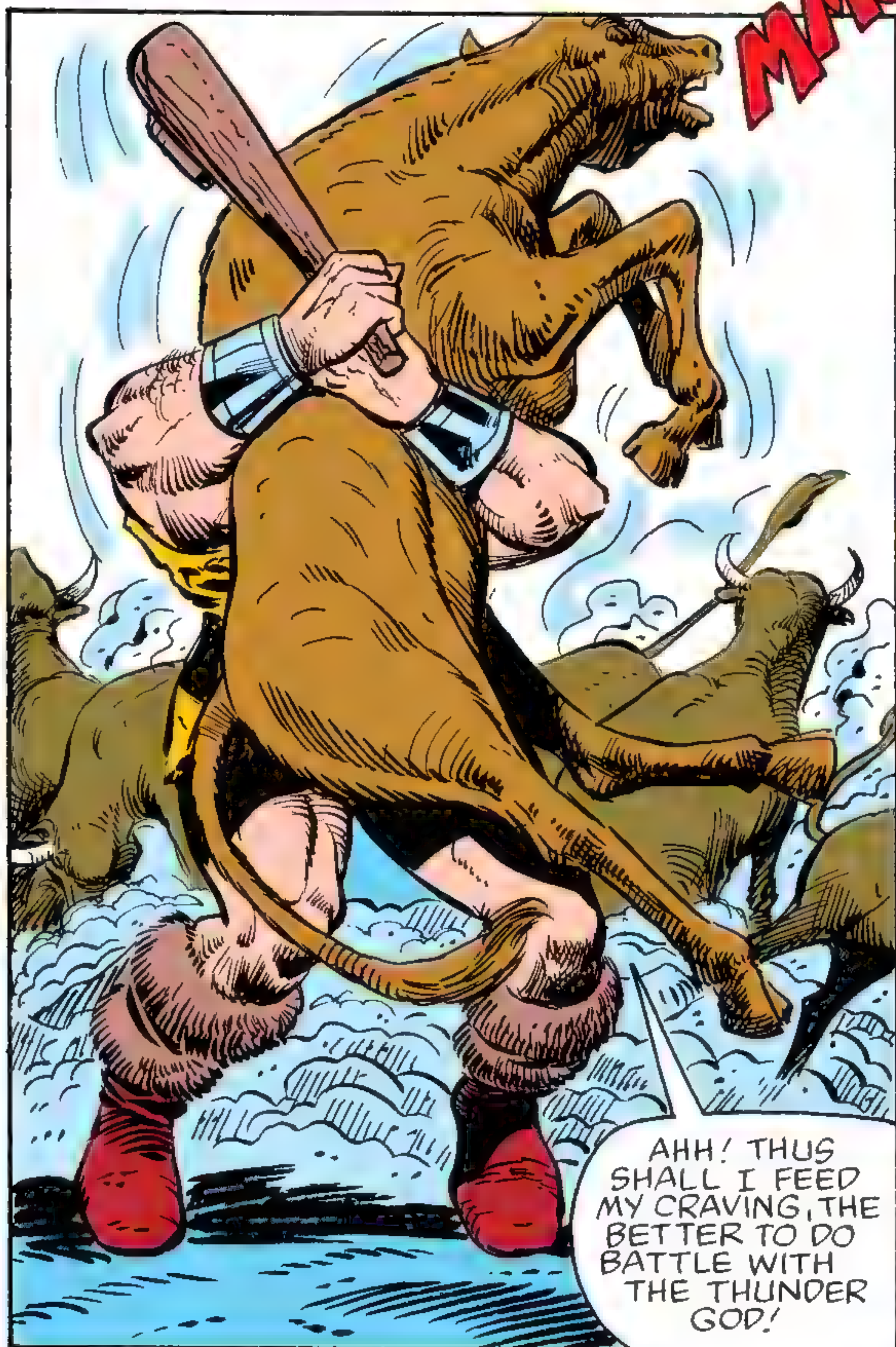
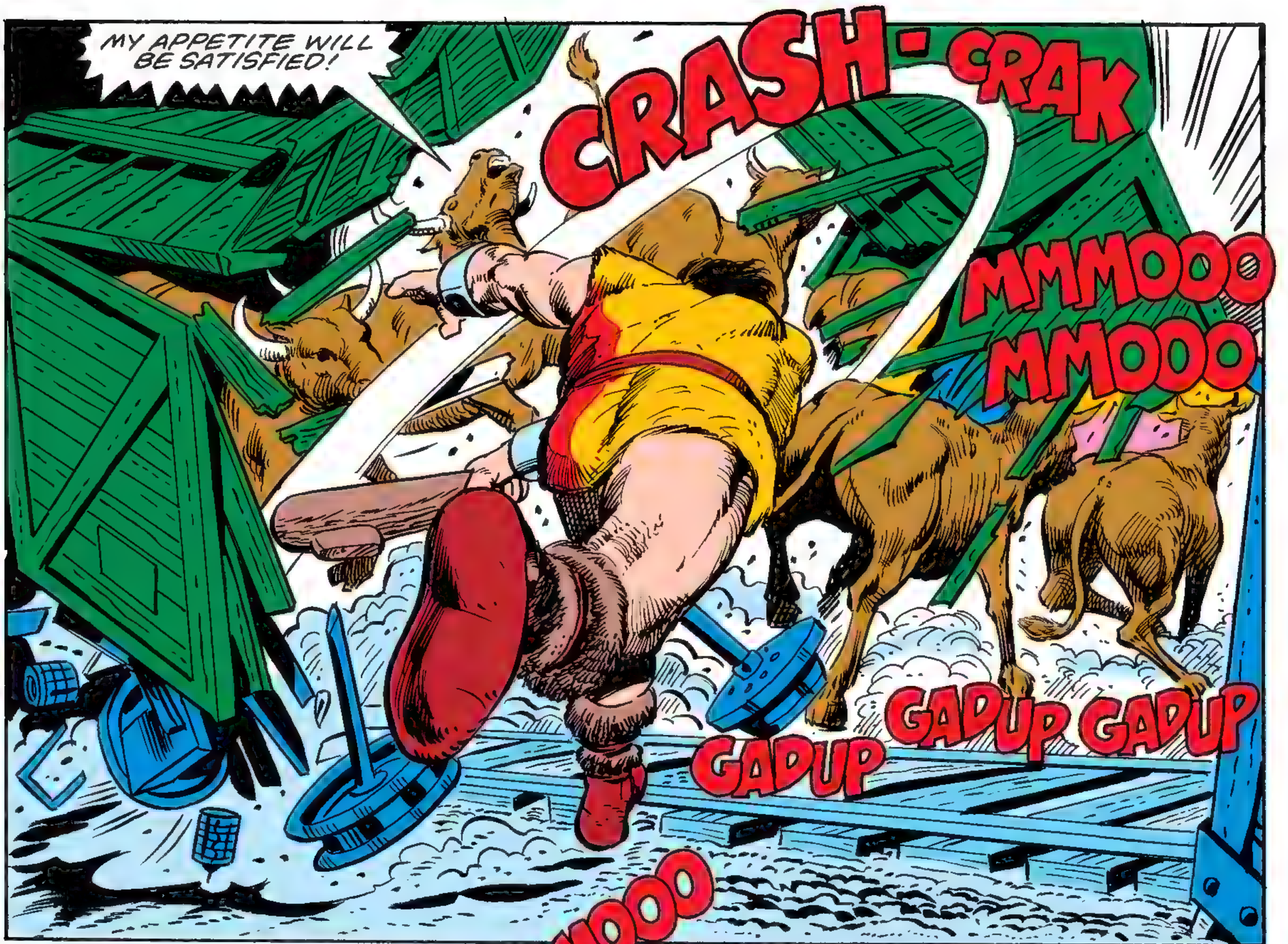


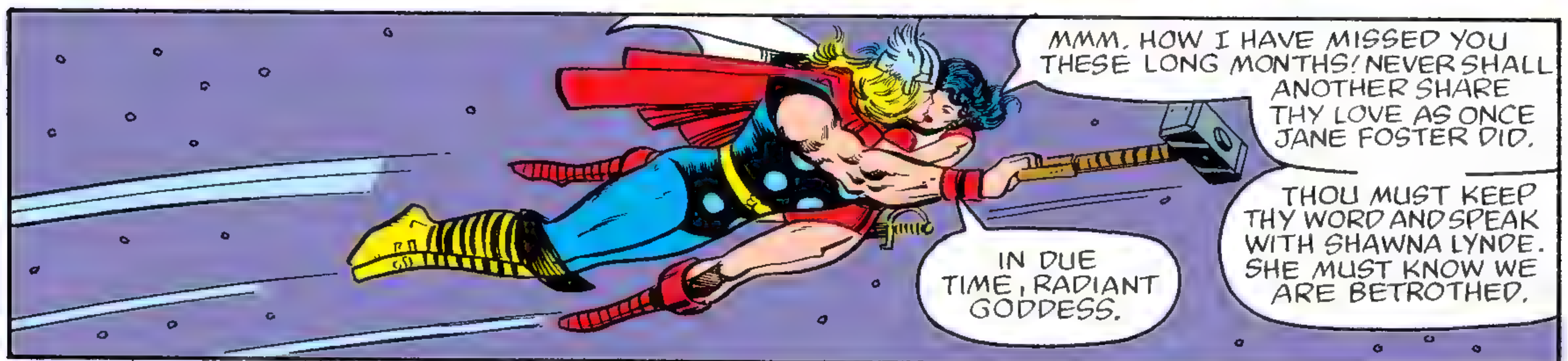
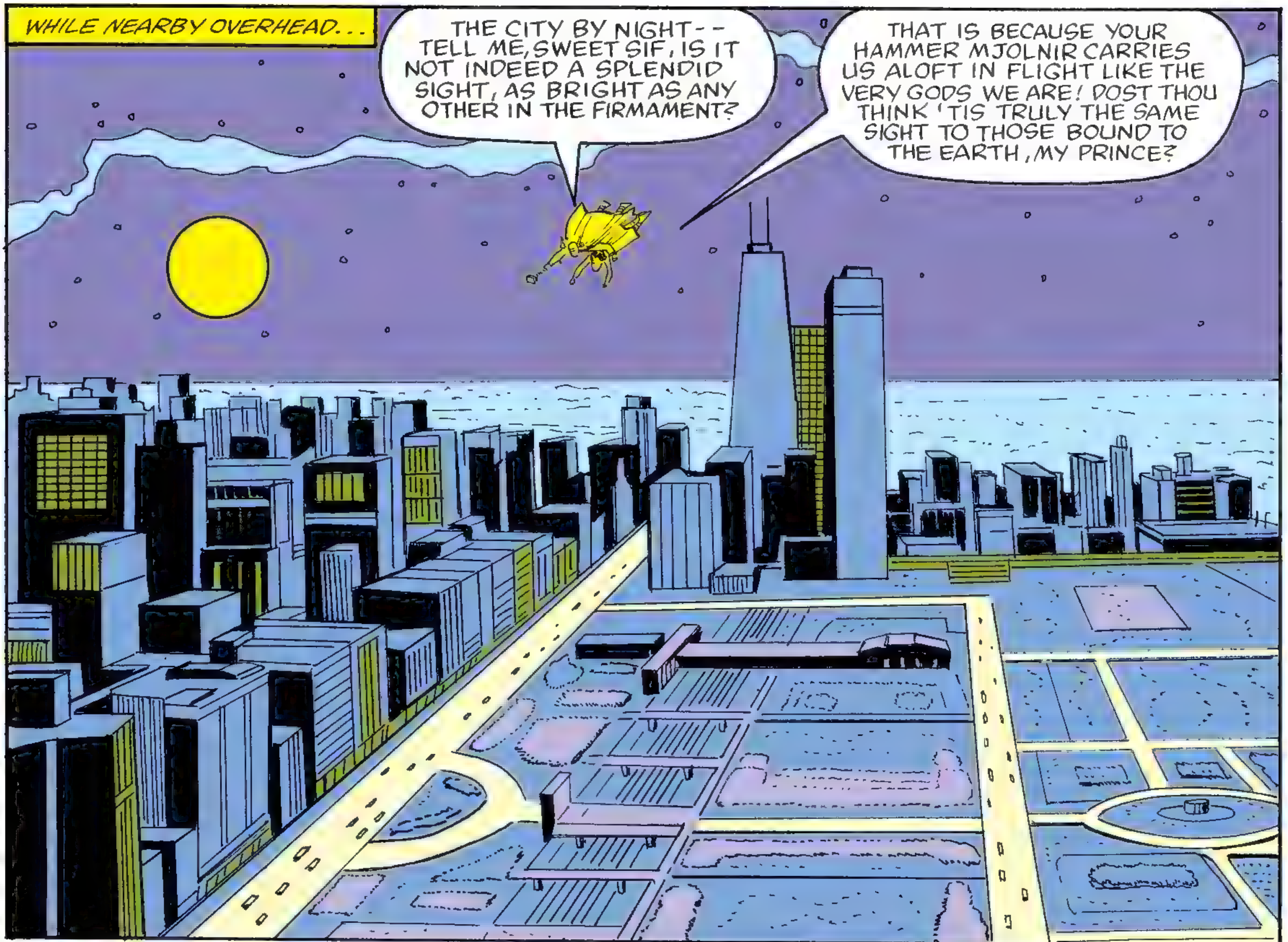
BOB, WHAT IS THAT THING?

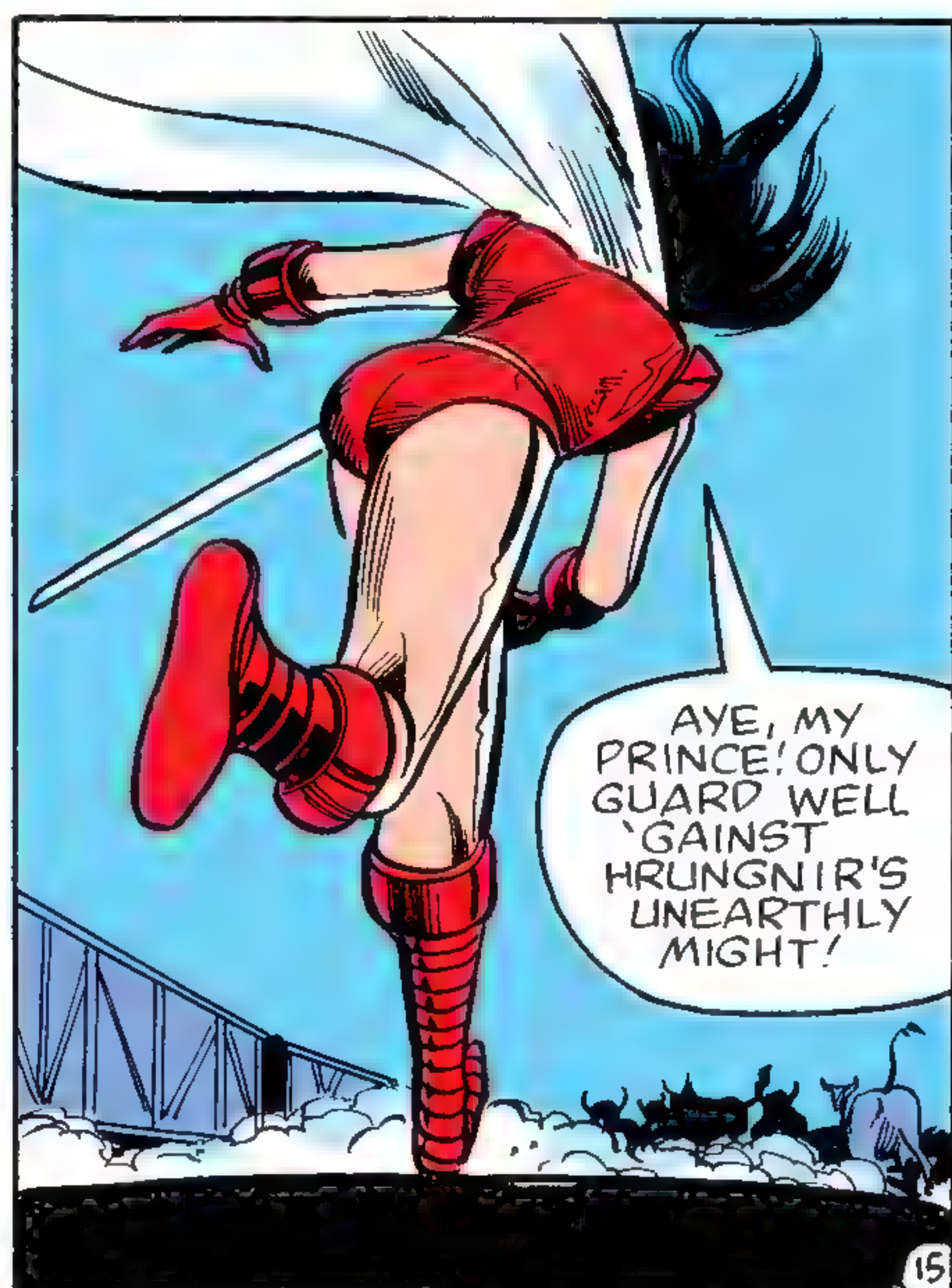
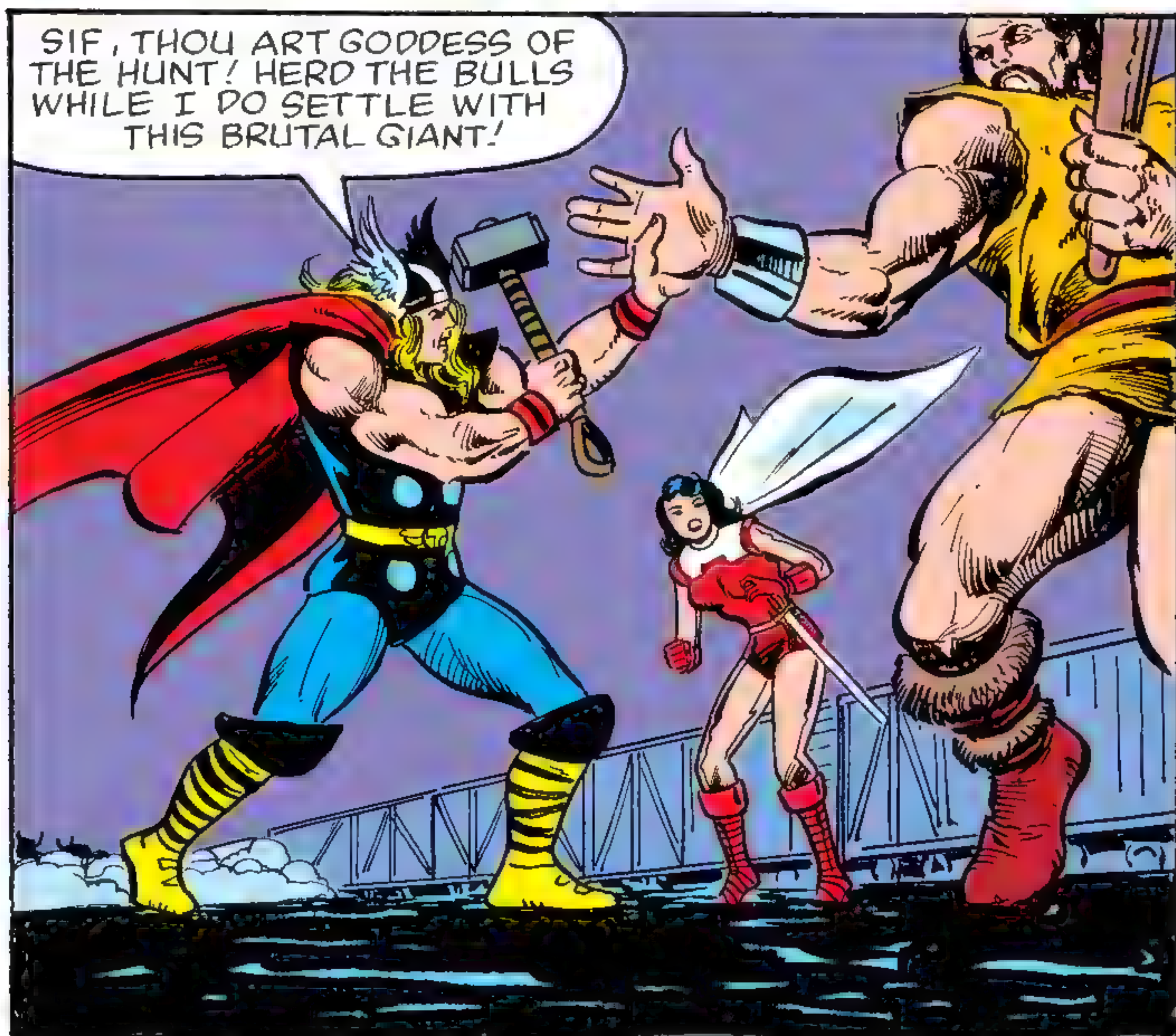
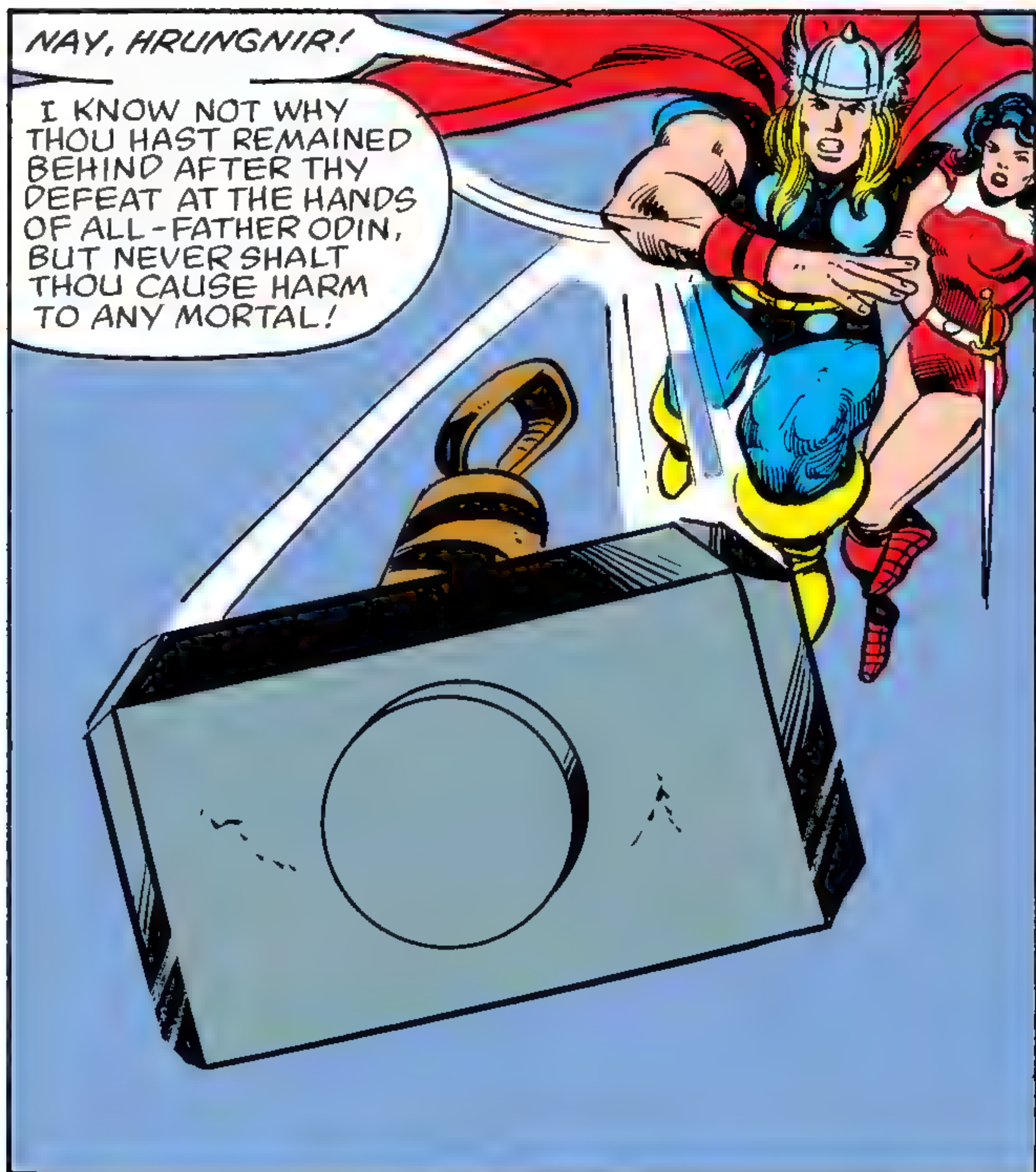
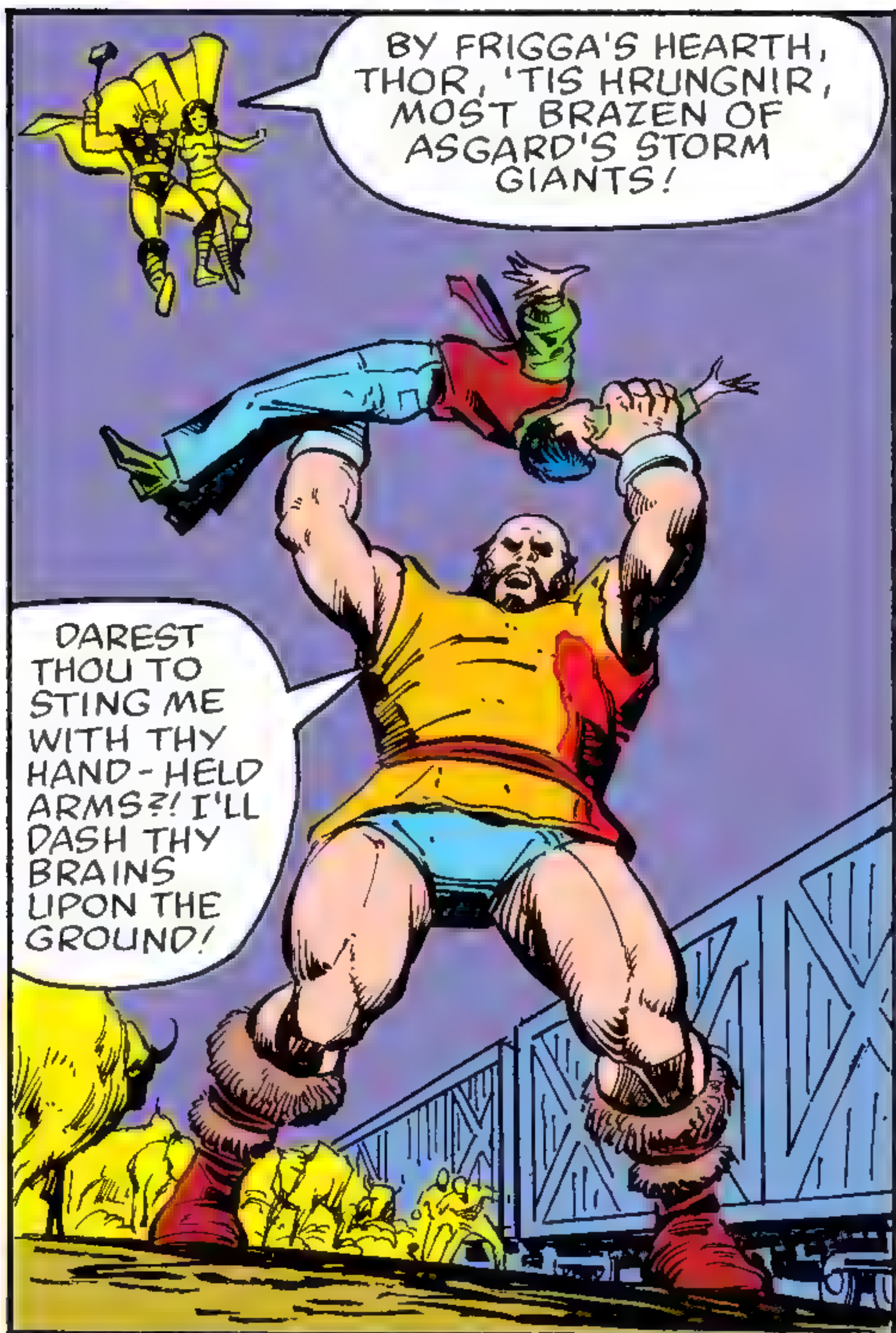
I DON'T KNOW, LEA, BUT SIT BACK-- I'M FLOORING THE PEDAL!

MY STOMACH'S PIT IS LIKE THE FLAMING CHASM AT JOTUNHEIM'S EDGE! I WOULD FILL IT WITH NOURISHMENT!



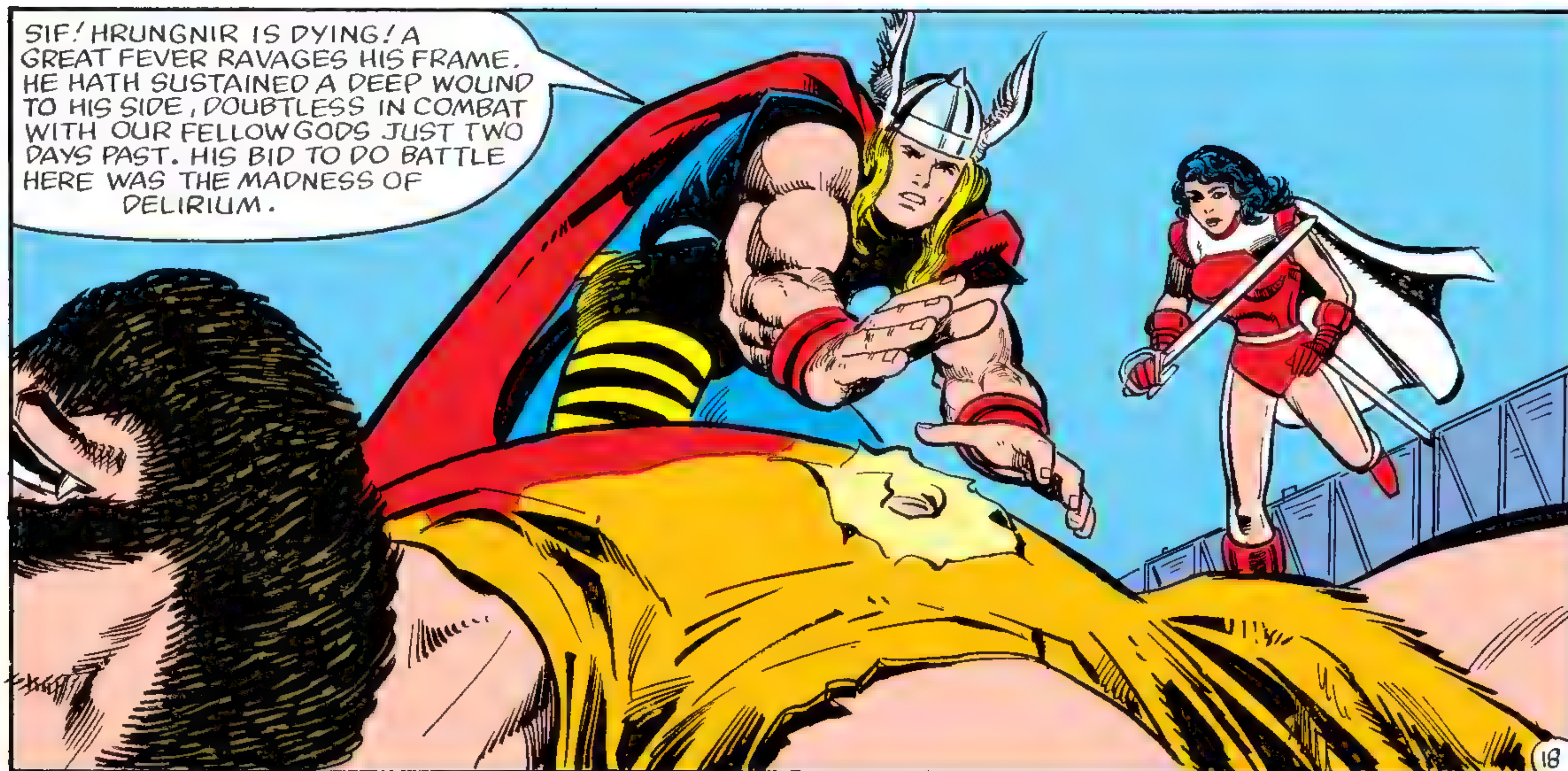
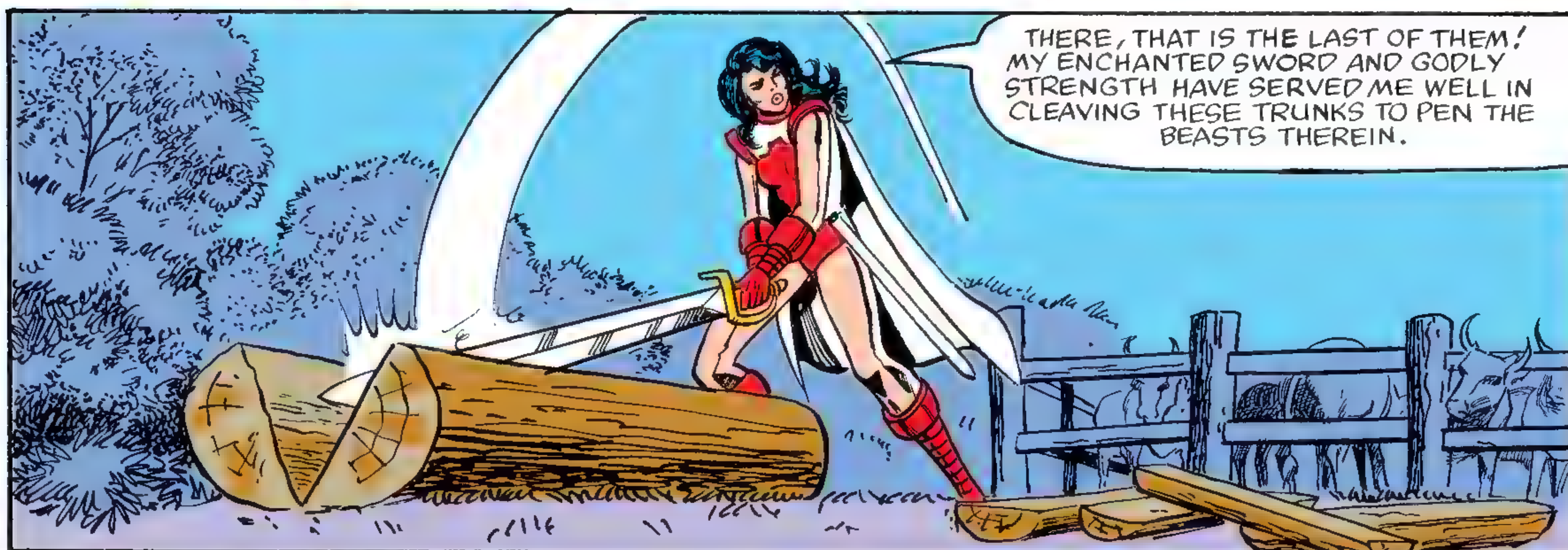
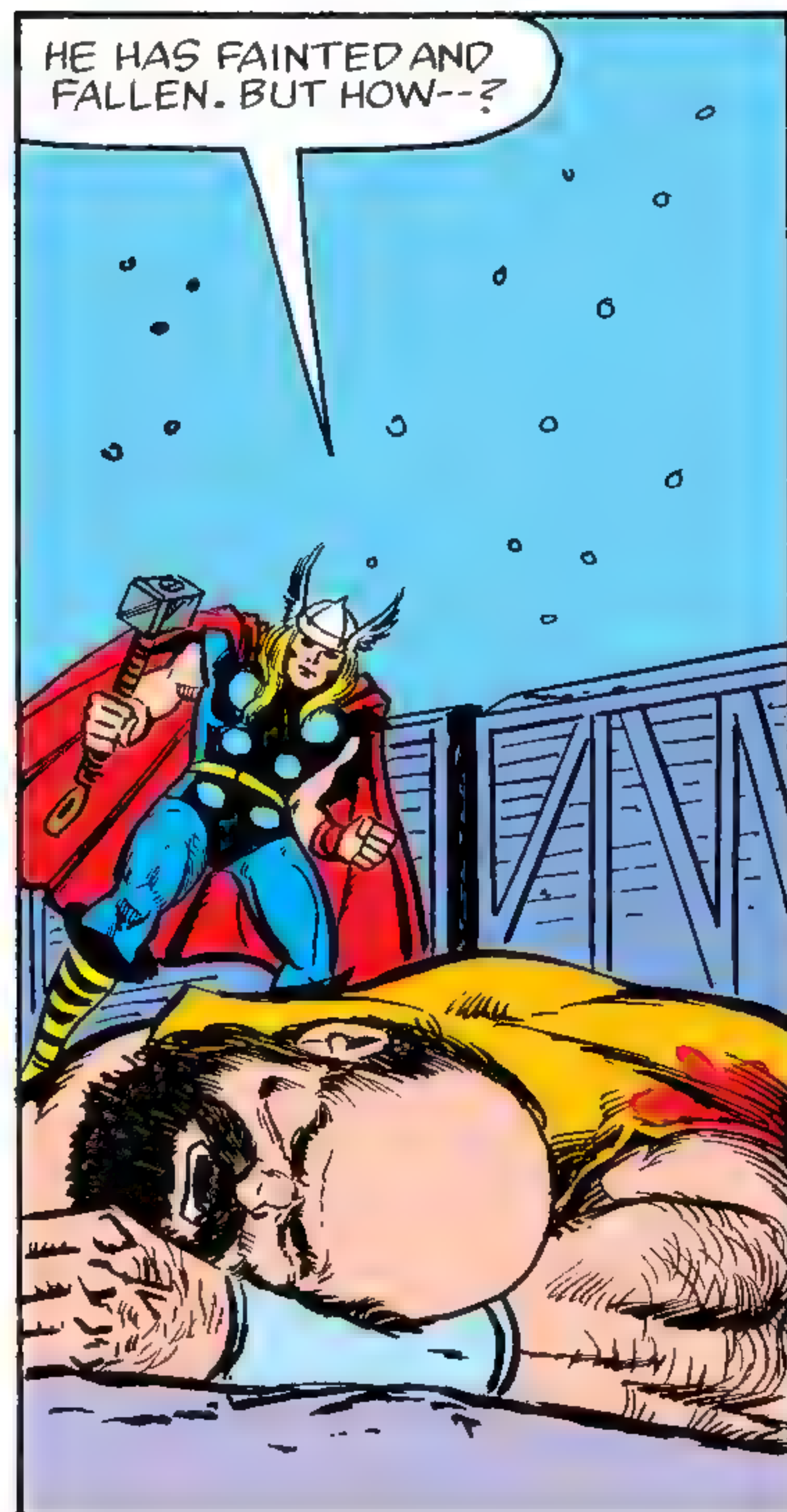
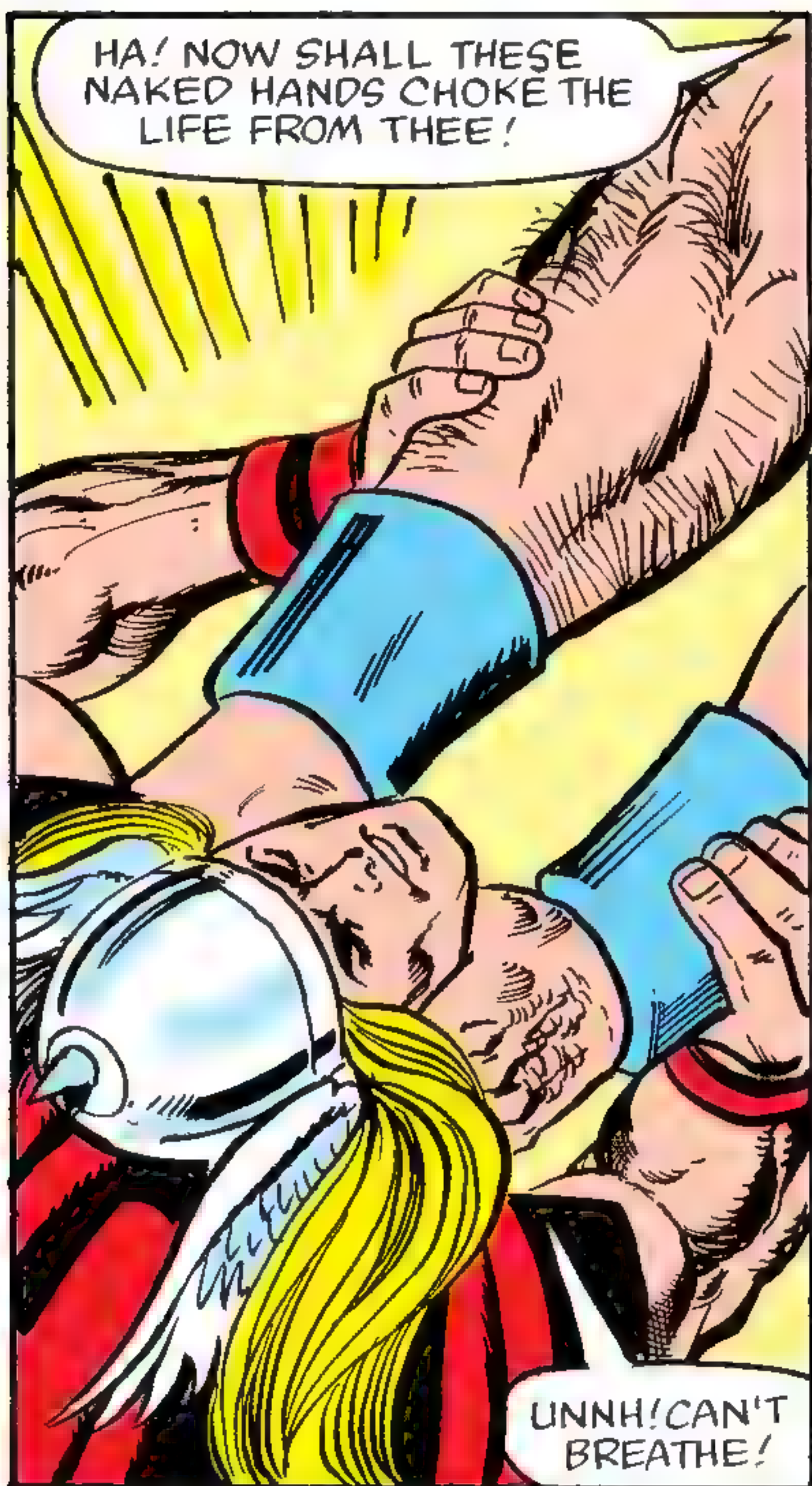


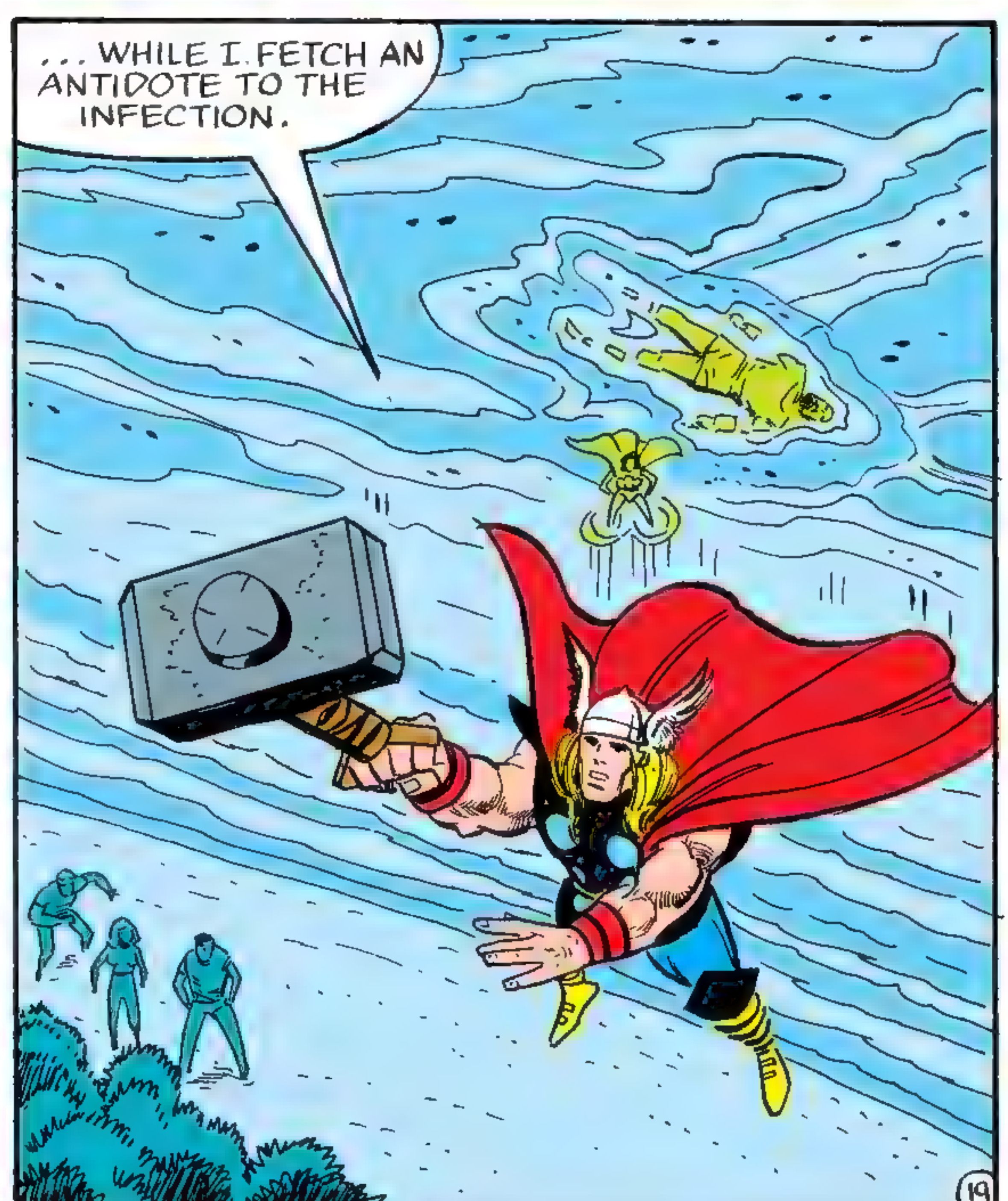
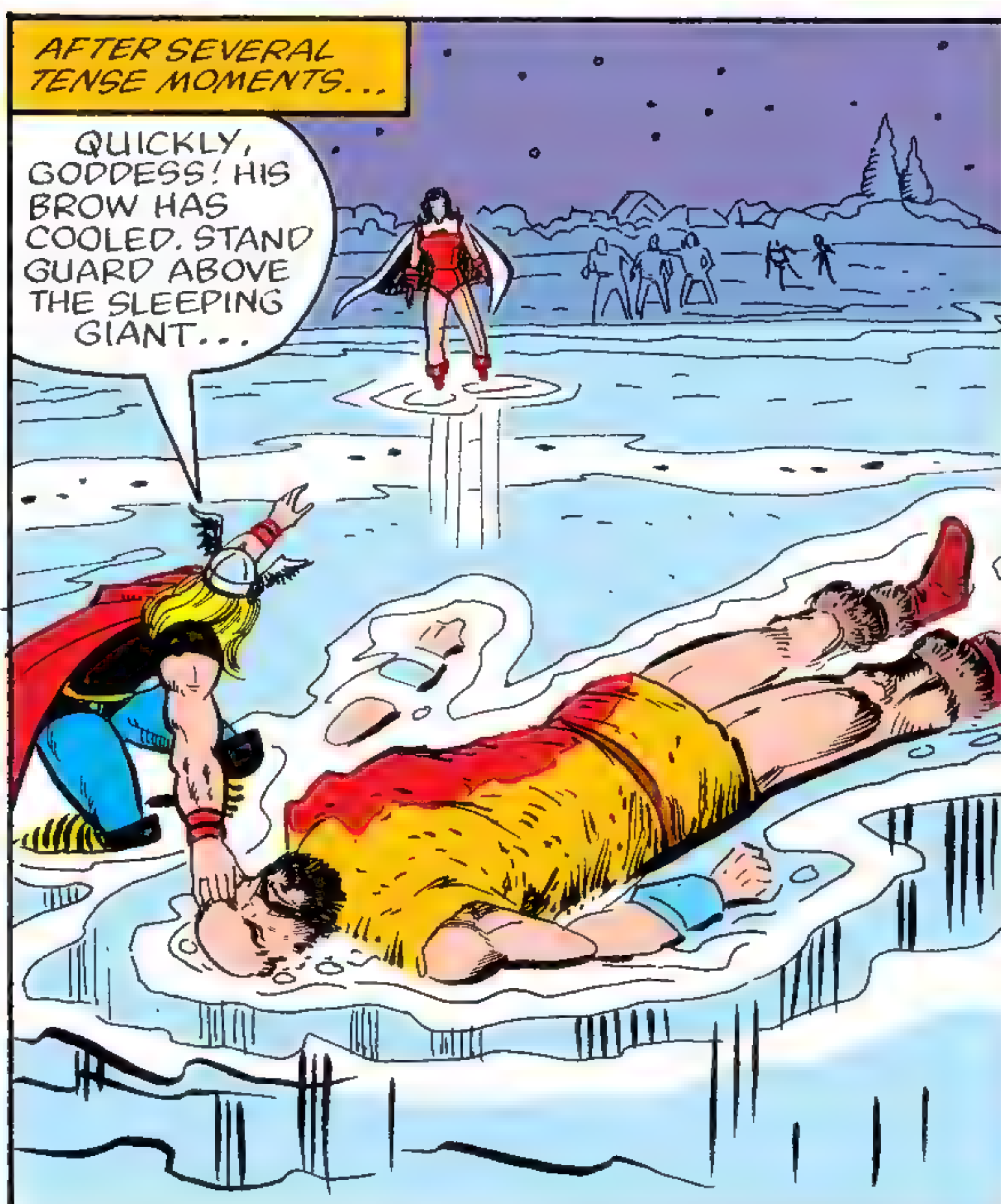
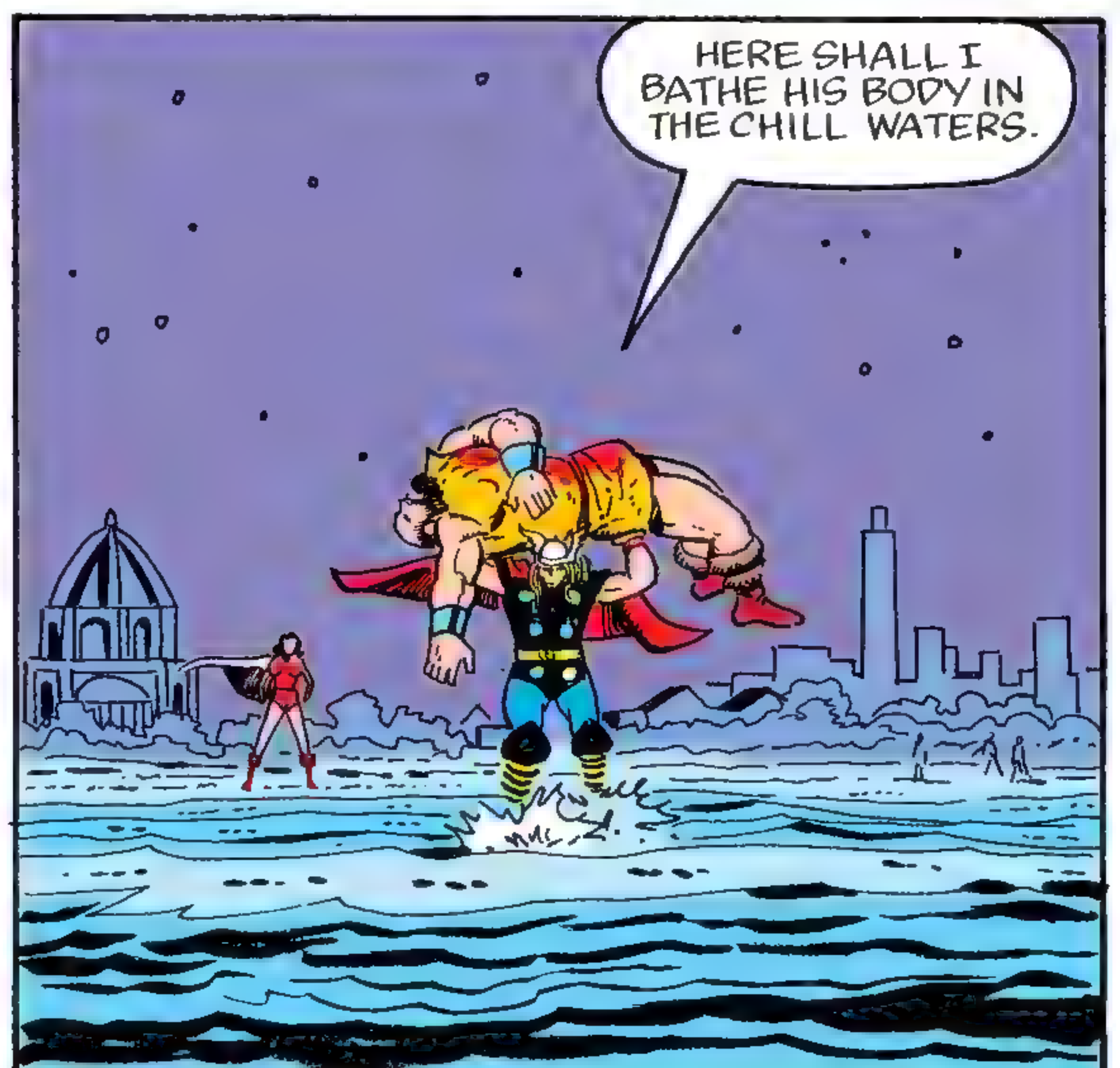
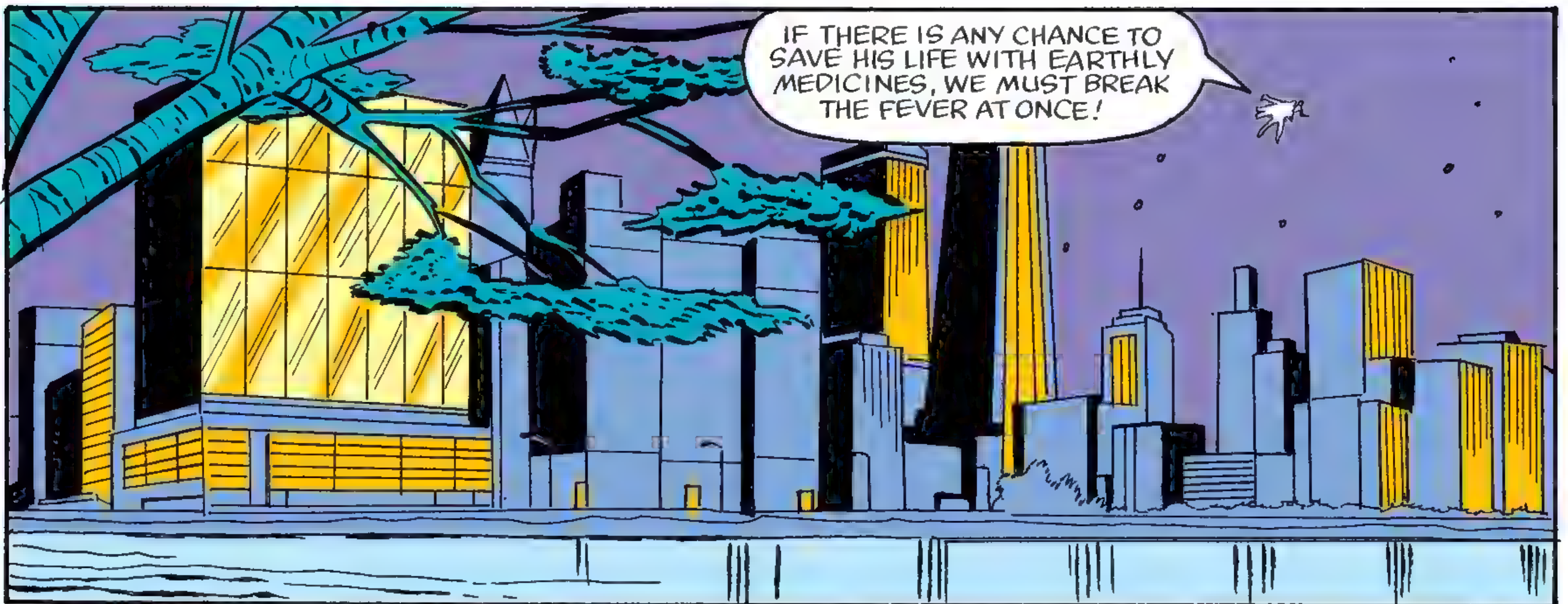


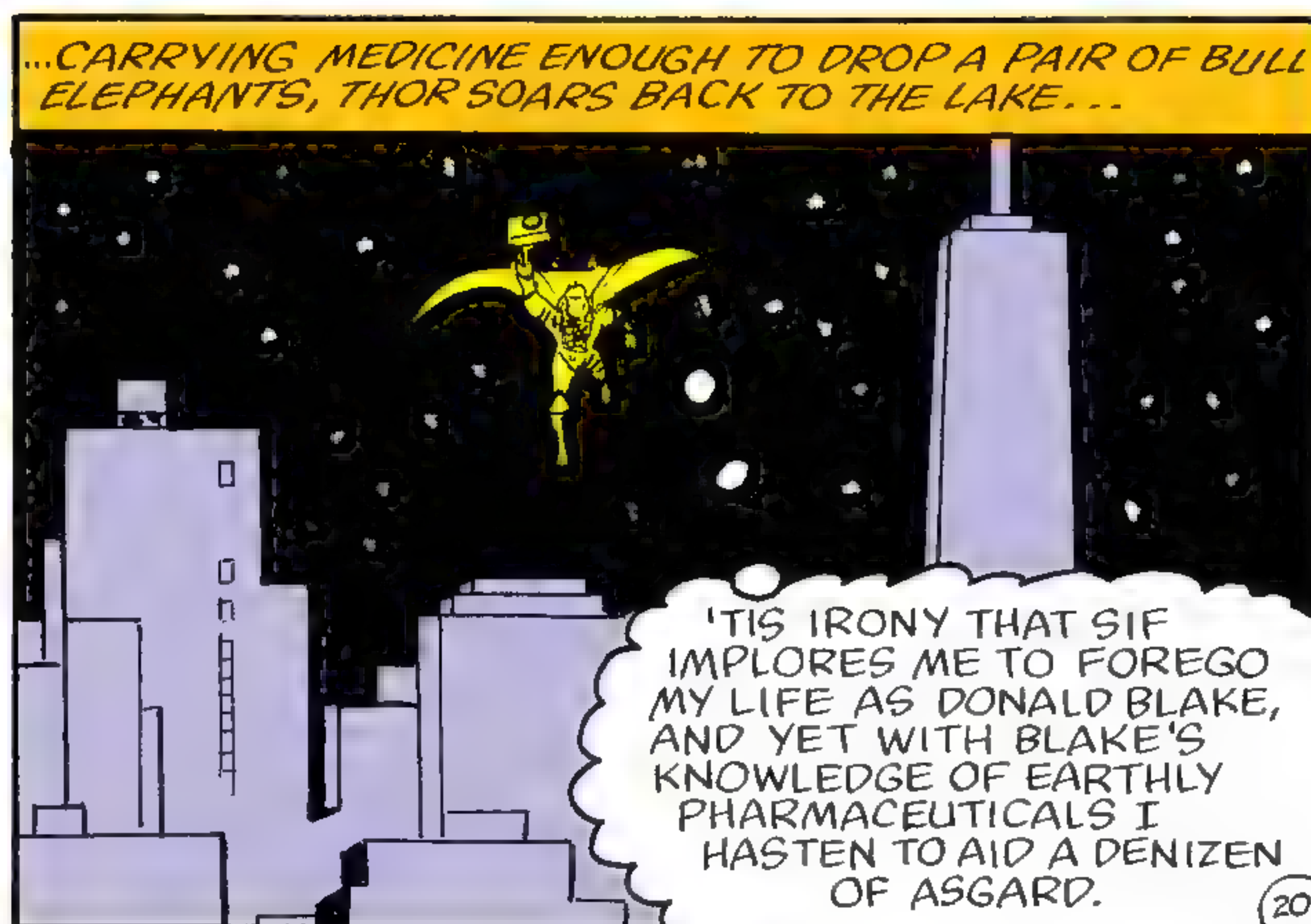
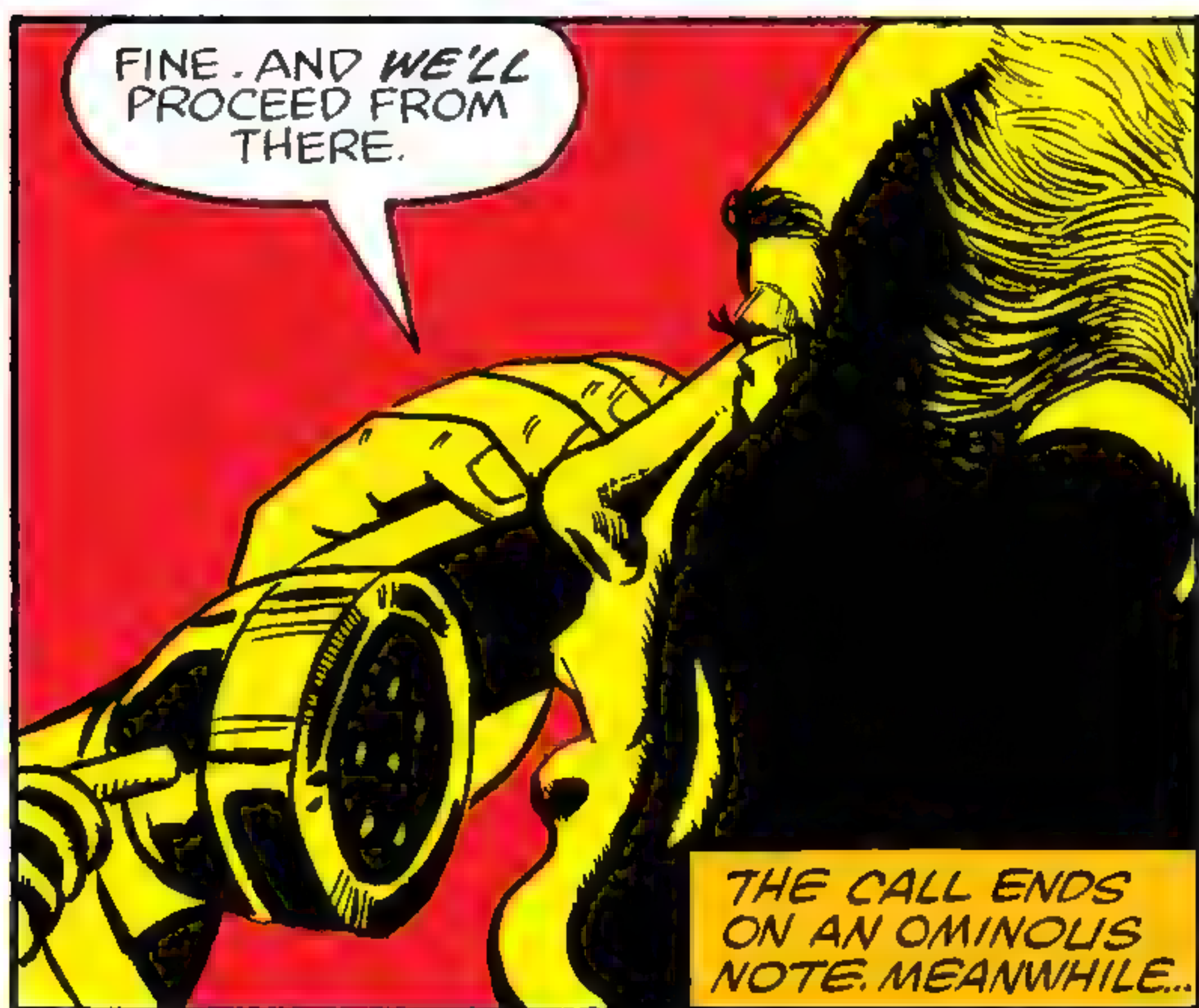
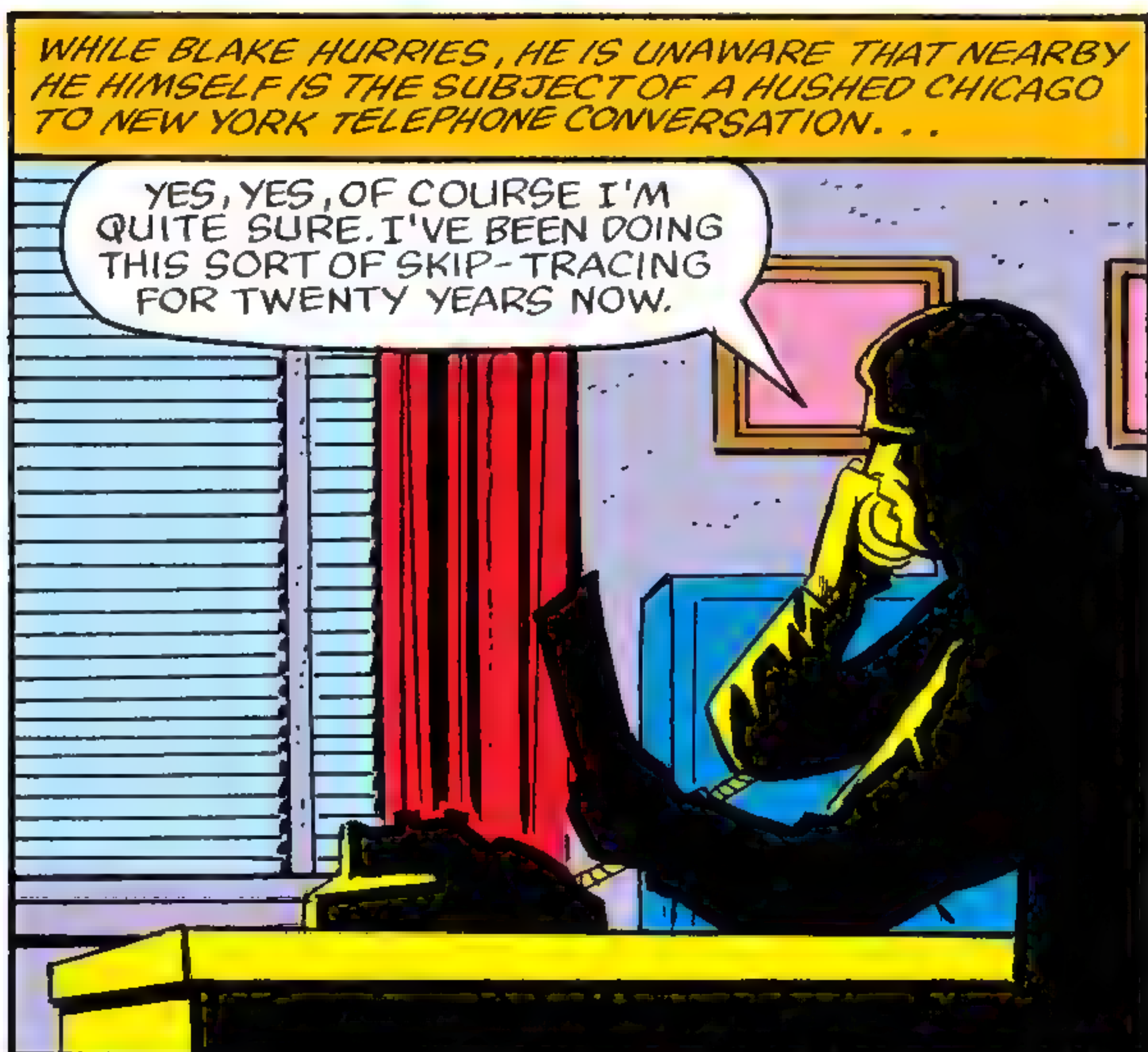
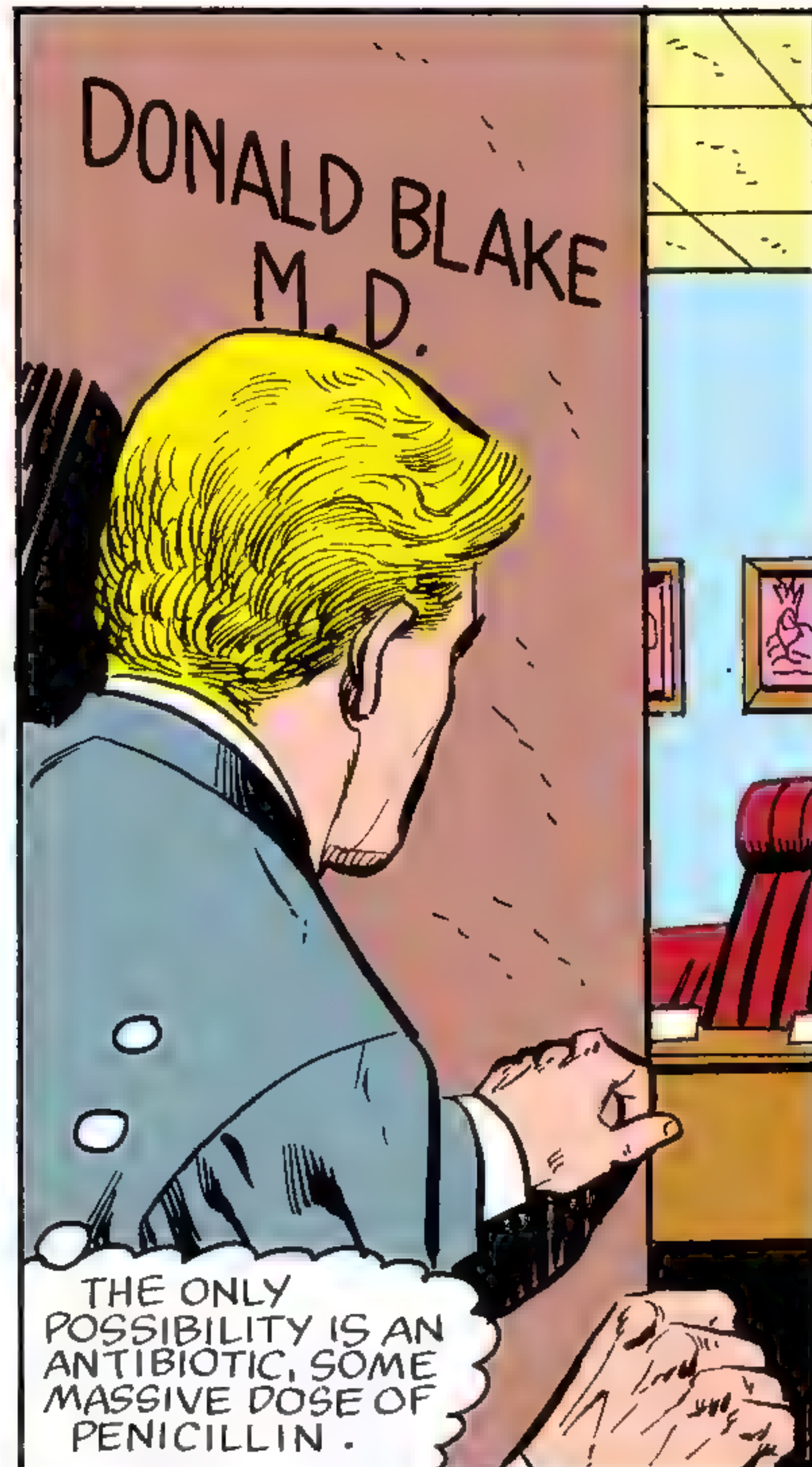
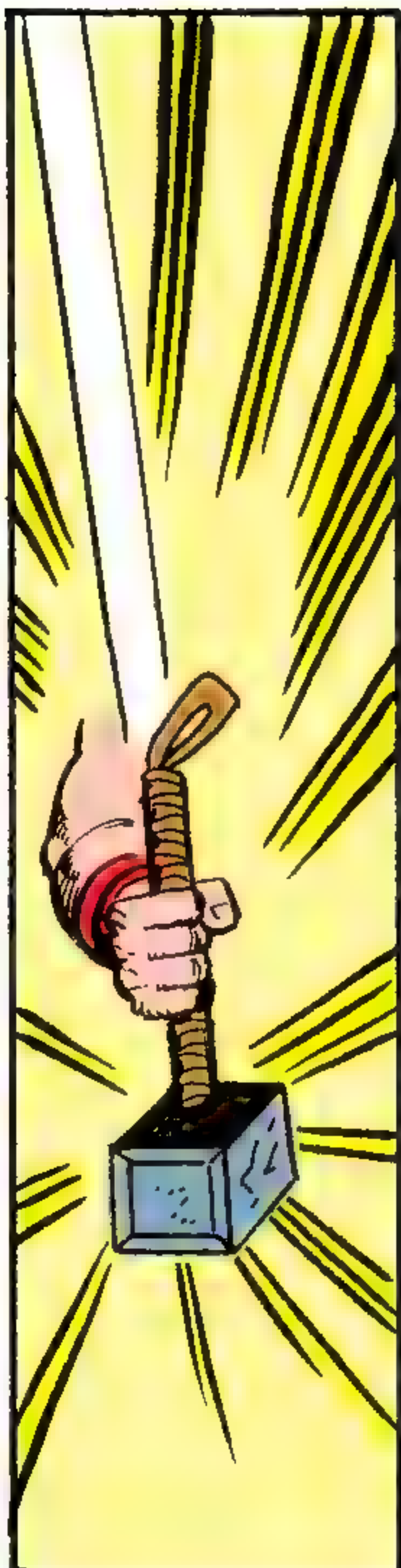


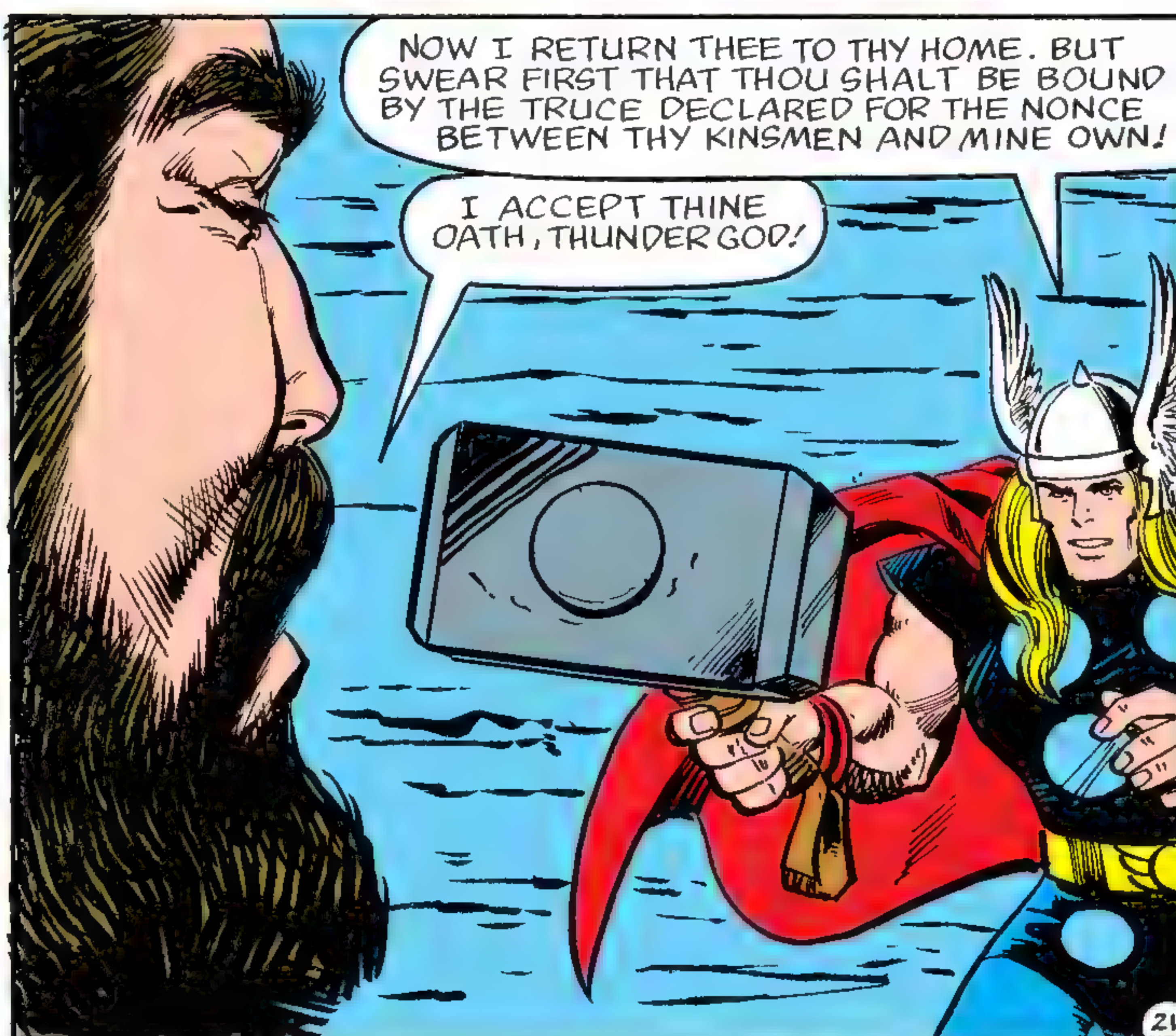
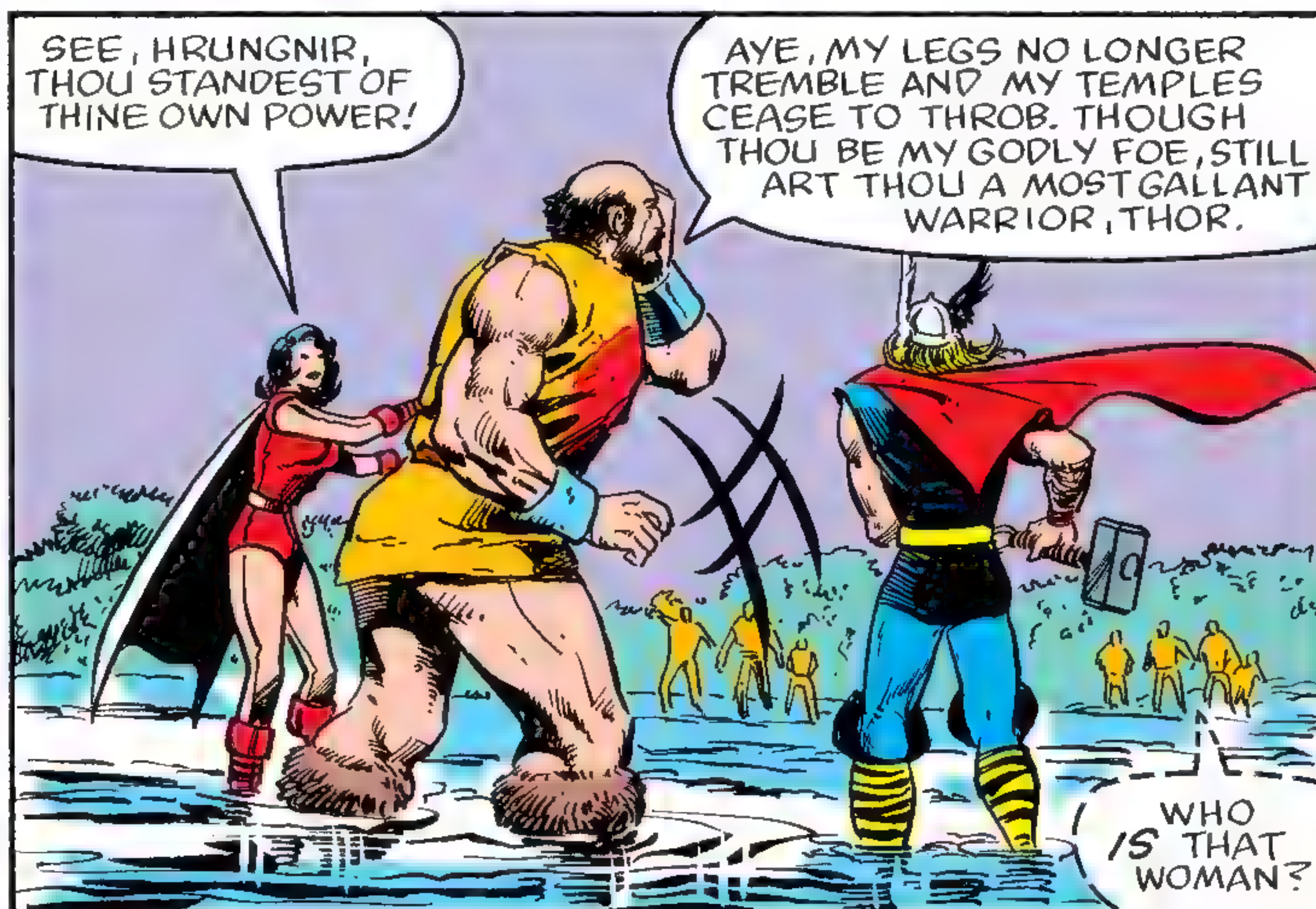
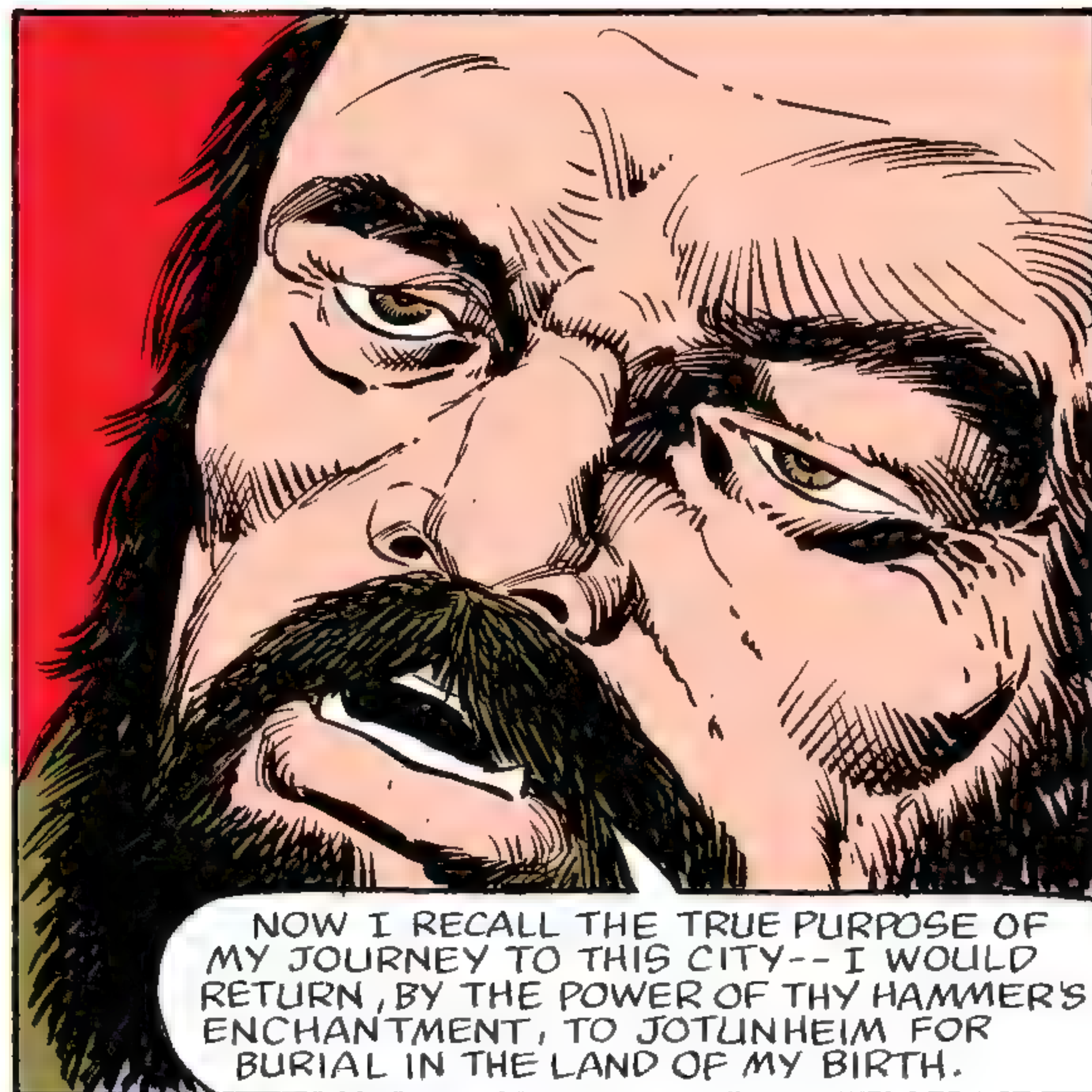


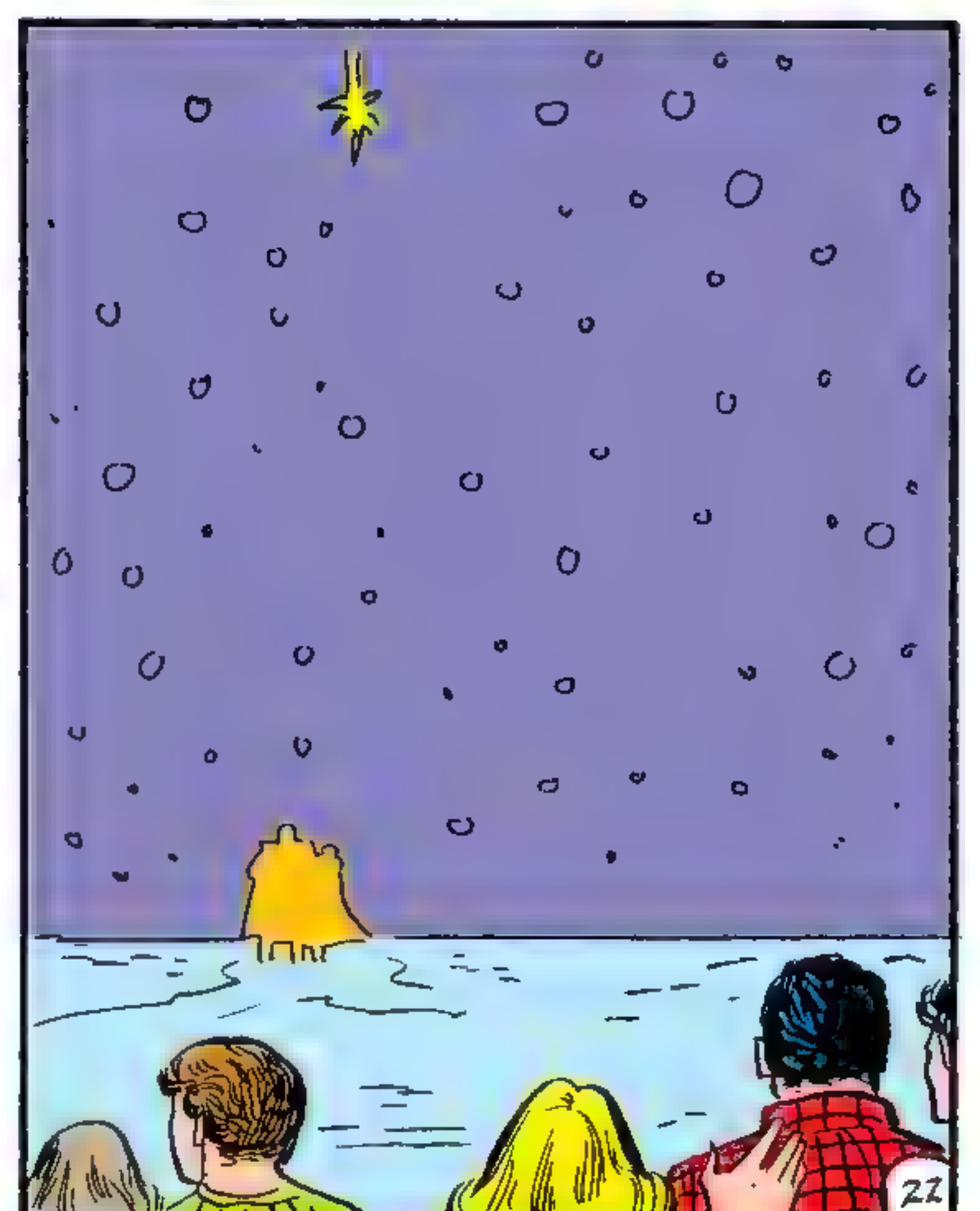
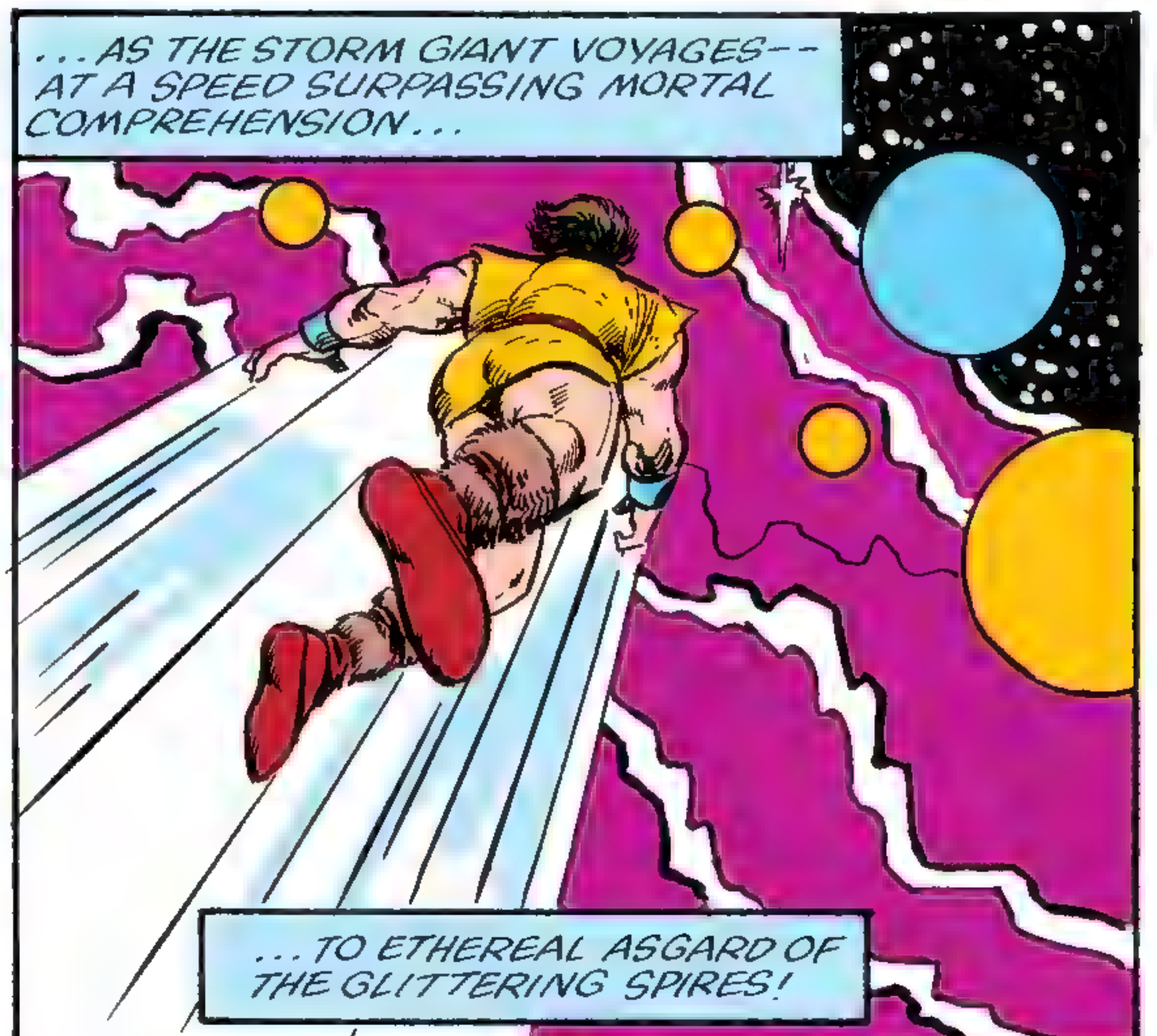
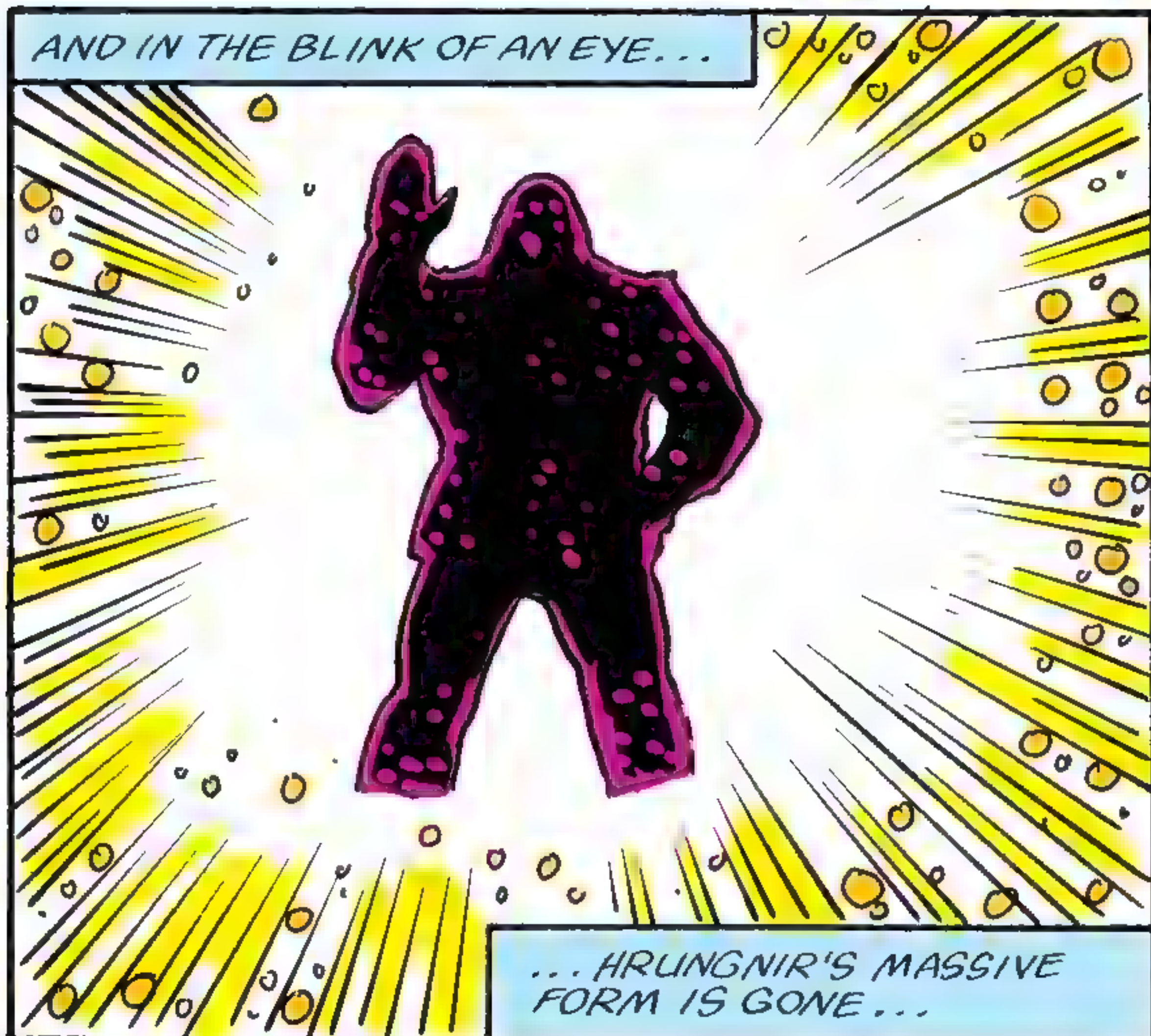












NEXT

CALL HIM THE CRUSADER!

60¢

330

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THE MIGHTY THOR®

REPENT OR *DIE*,
LINGODLY PAGAN!



CRY OF THE
CRUSADER!

HALL & BREEDING

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**

THOR! GOD OF THUNDER!
PRINCE OF CELESTIAL ASGARD!
HE CHOOSES NONETHELESS TO
SEEK HIS DESTINY ON EARTH
AS CHAMPION OF TOILING
HUMANKIND.

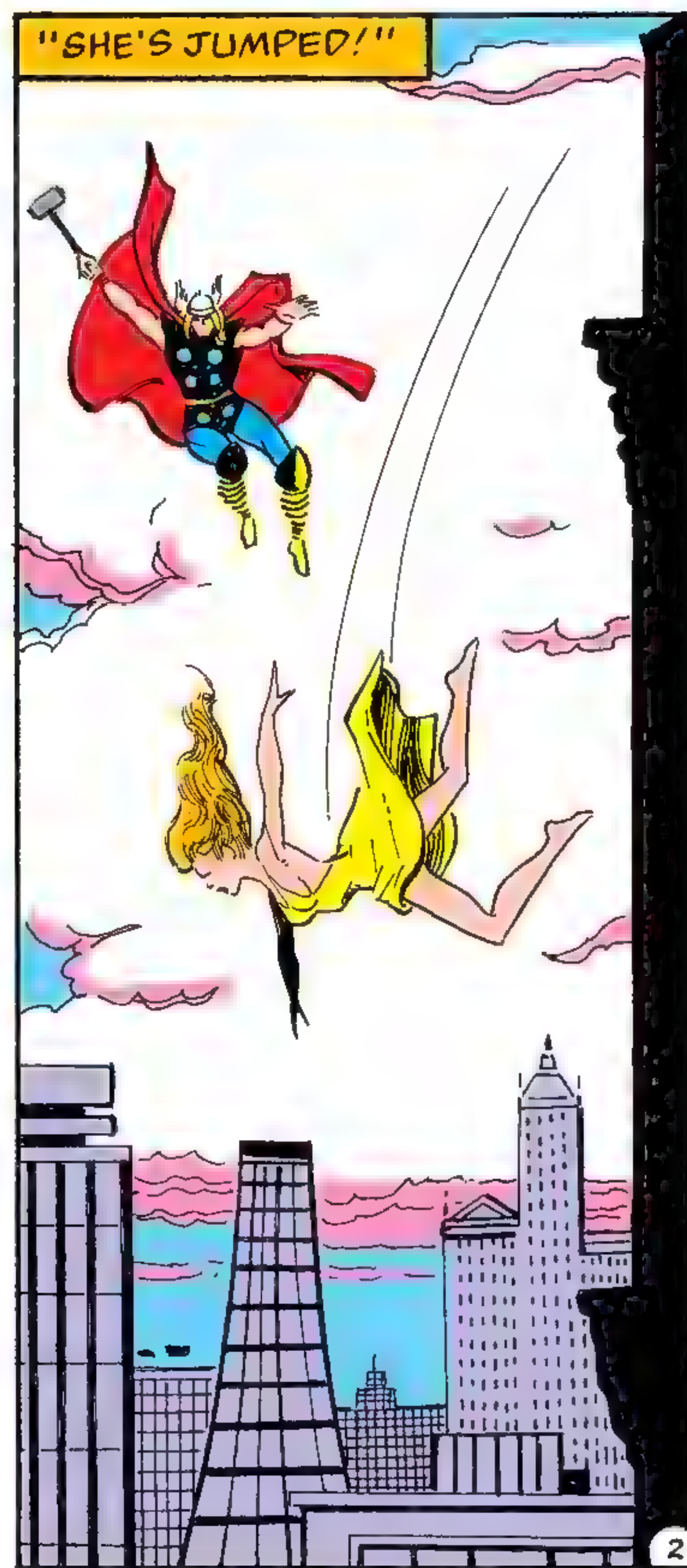
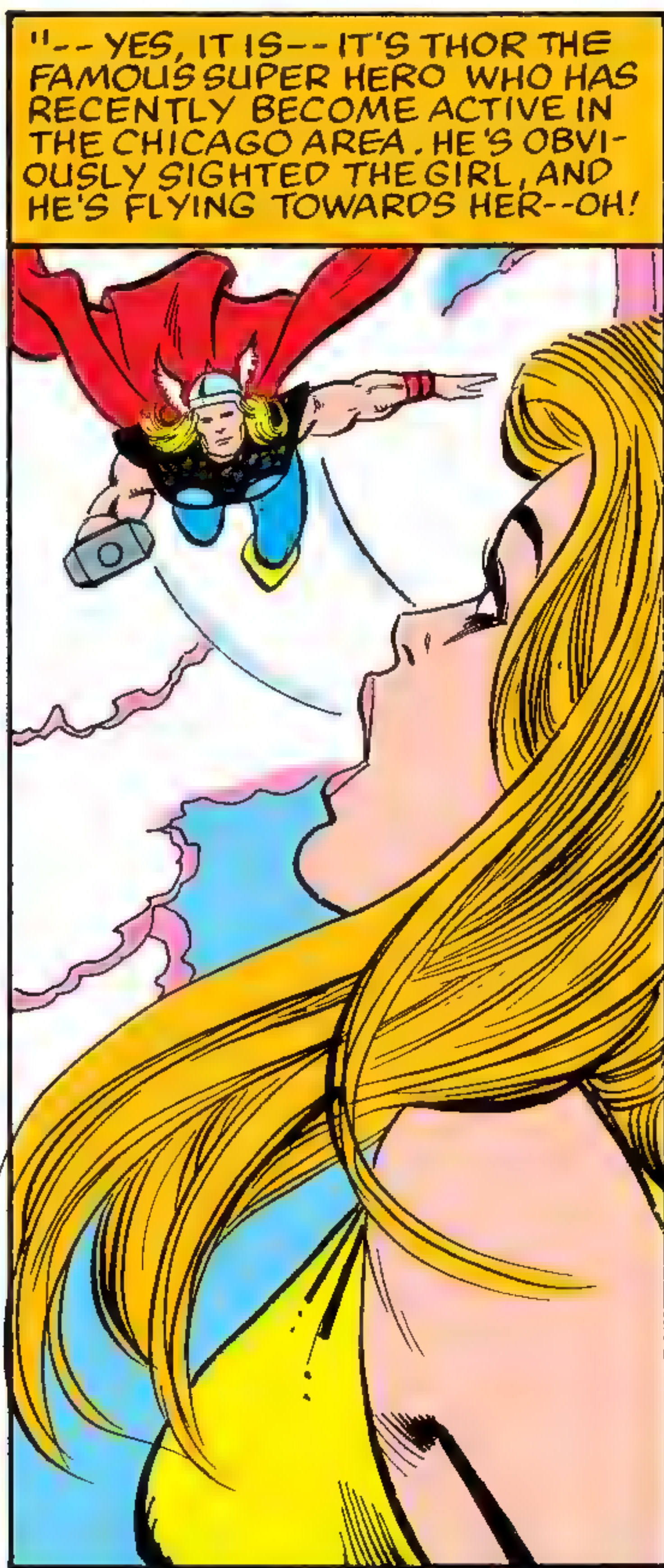
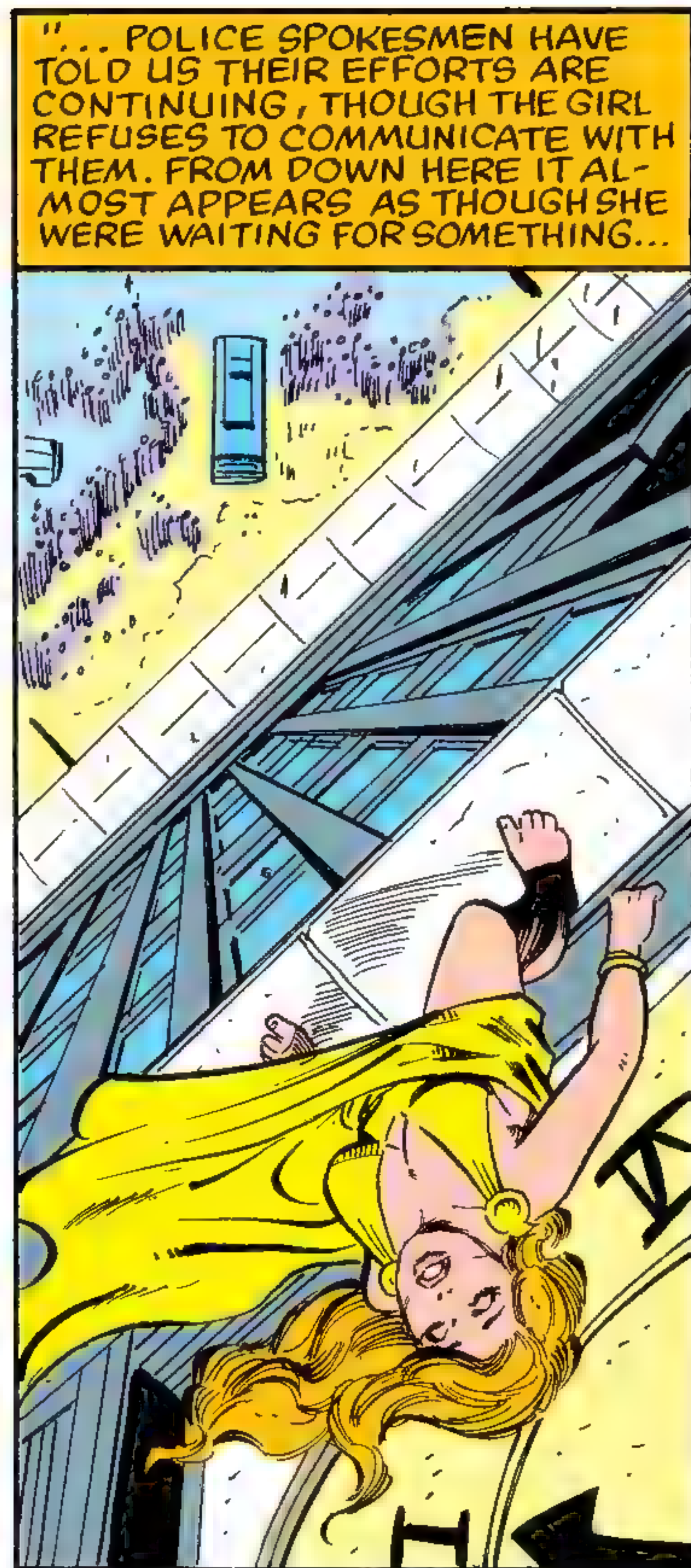
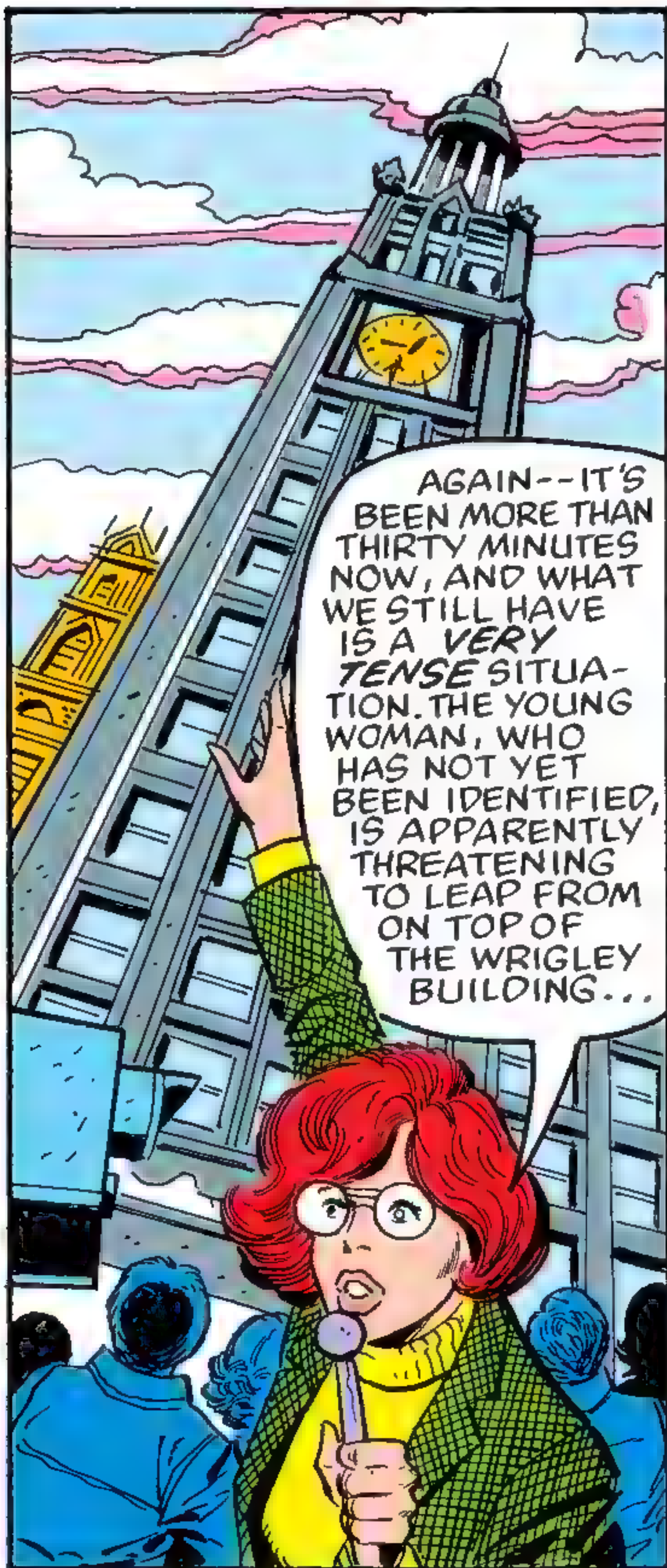
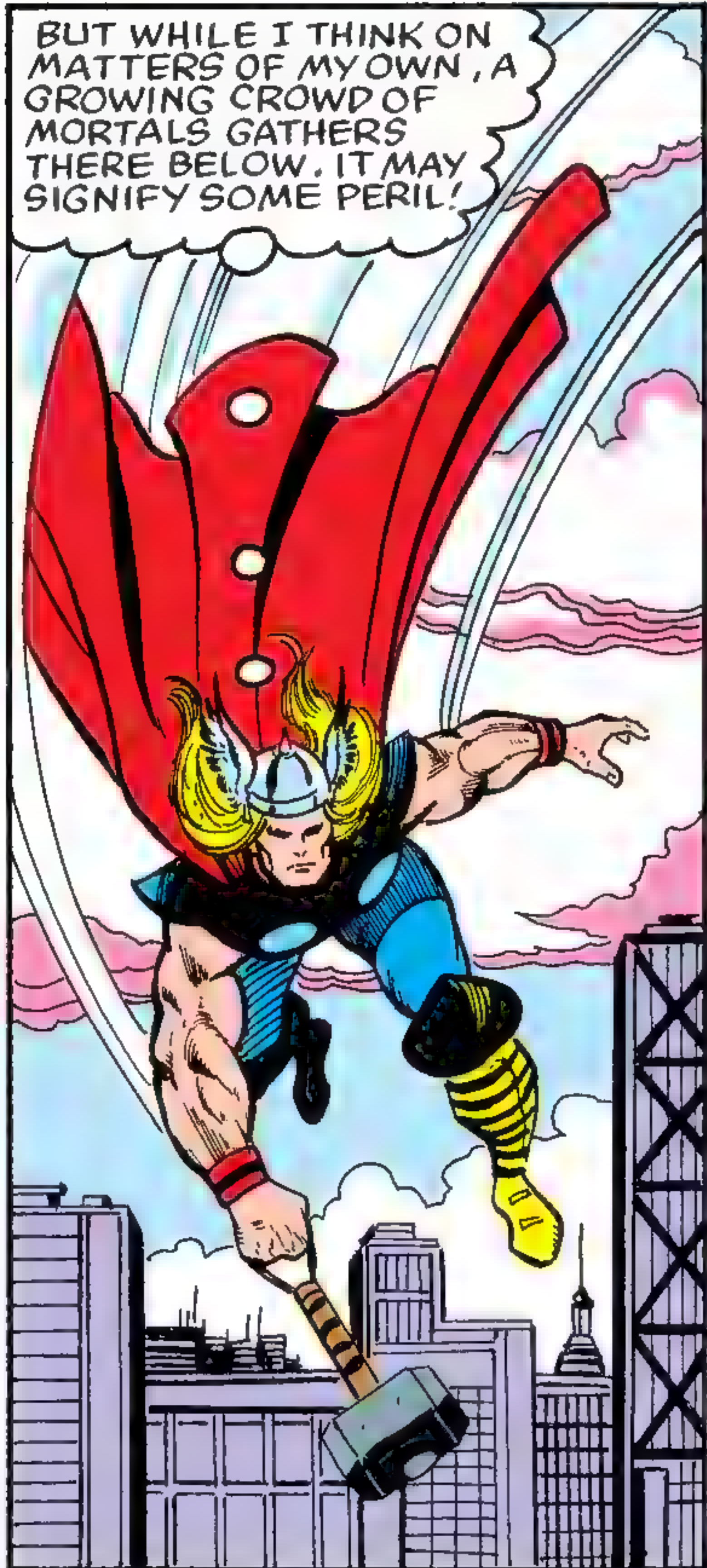
SOARING NOW ON THE BRACING
LAKESHORE WINDS ABOVE CHICAGO,
THOR IS THE VERY IMAGE OF
ETERNAL YOUTH-- VIGOROUS IN
BODY, COMMANDING IN PRESENCE...

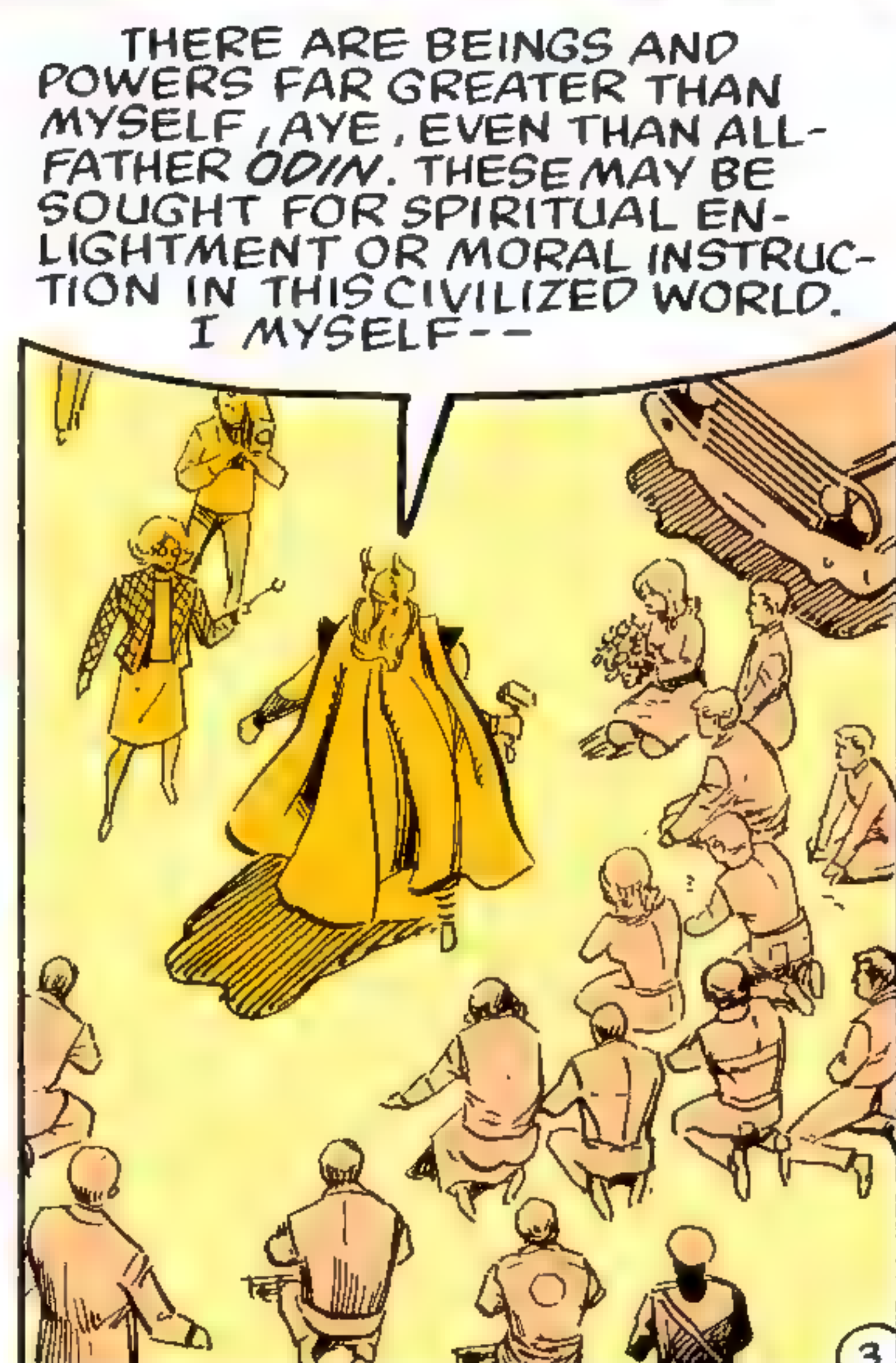
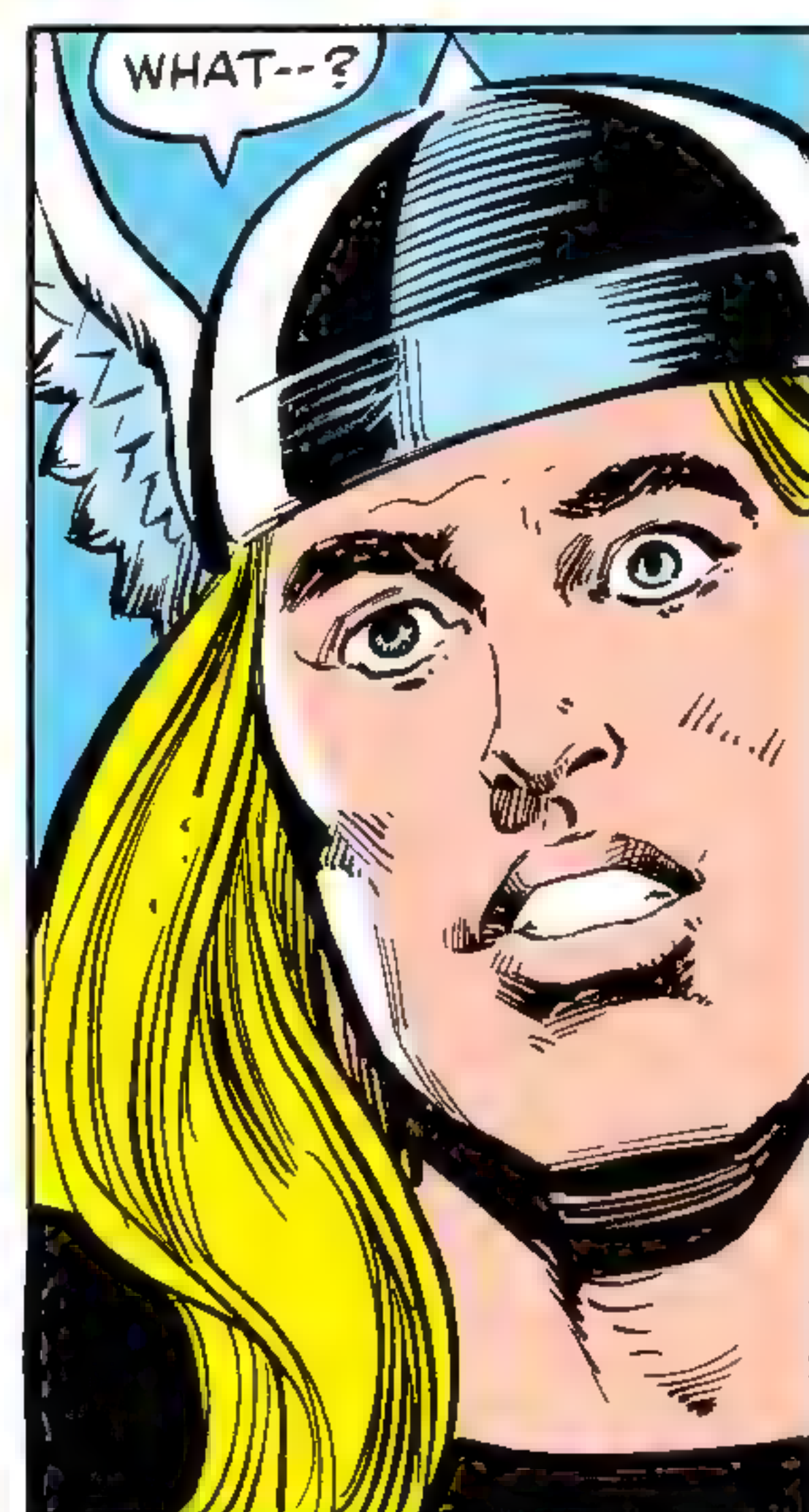
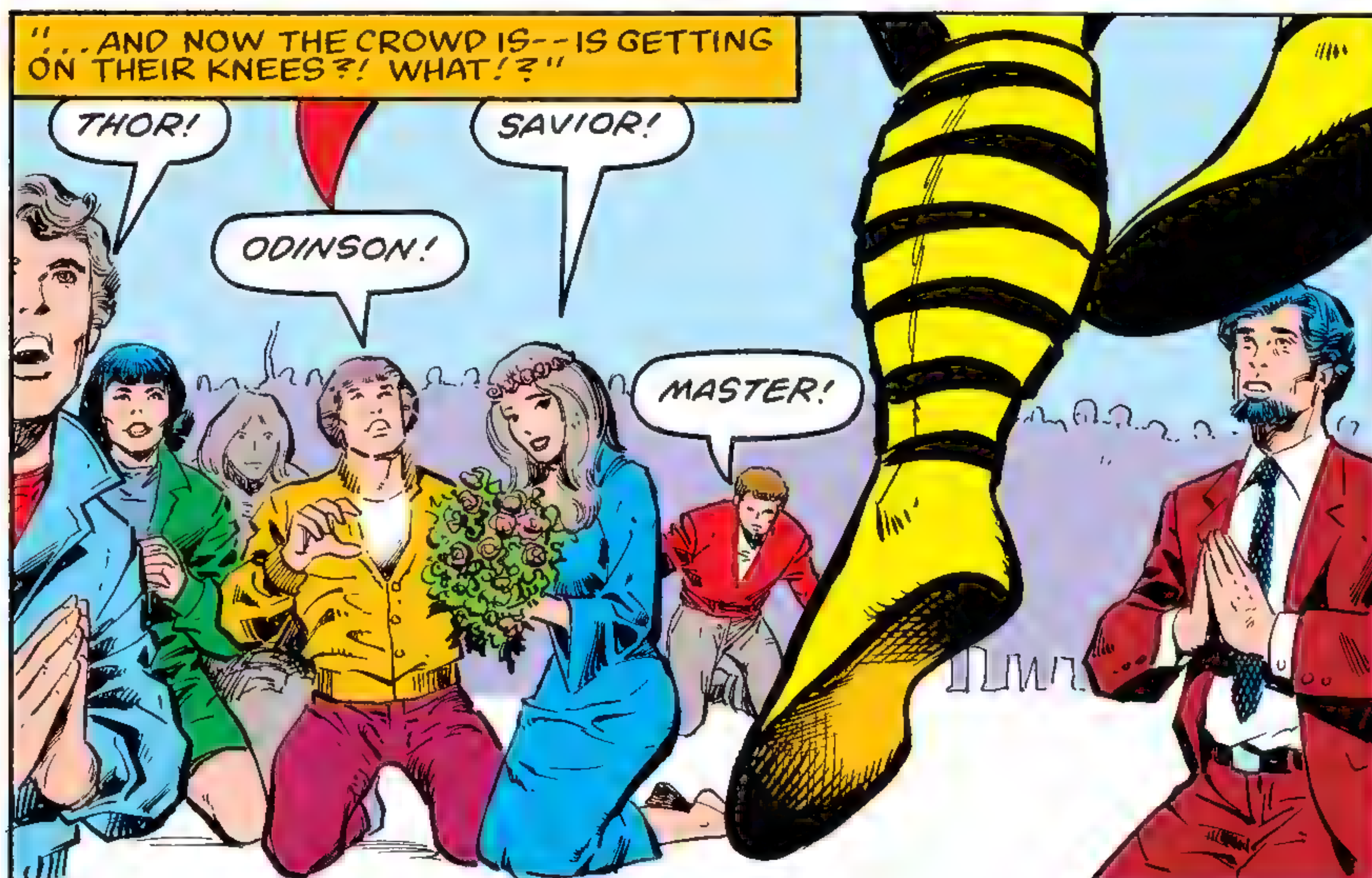
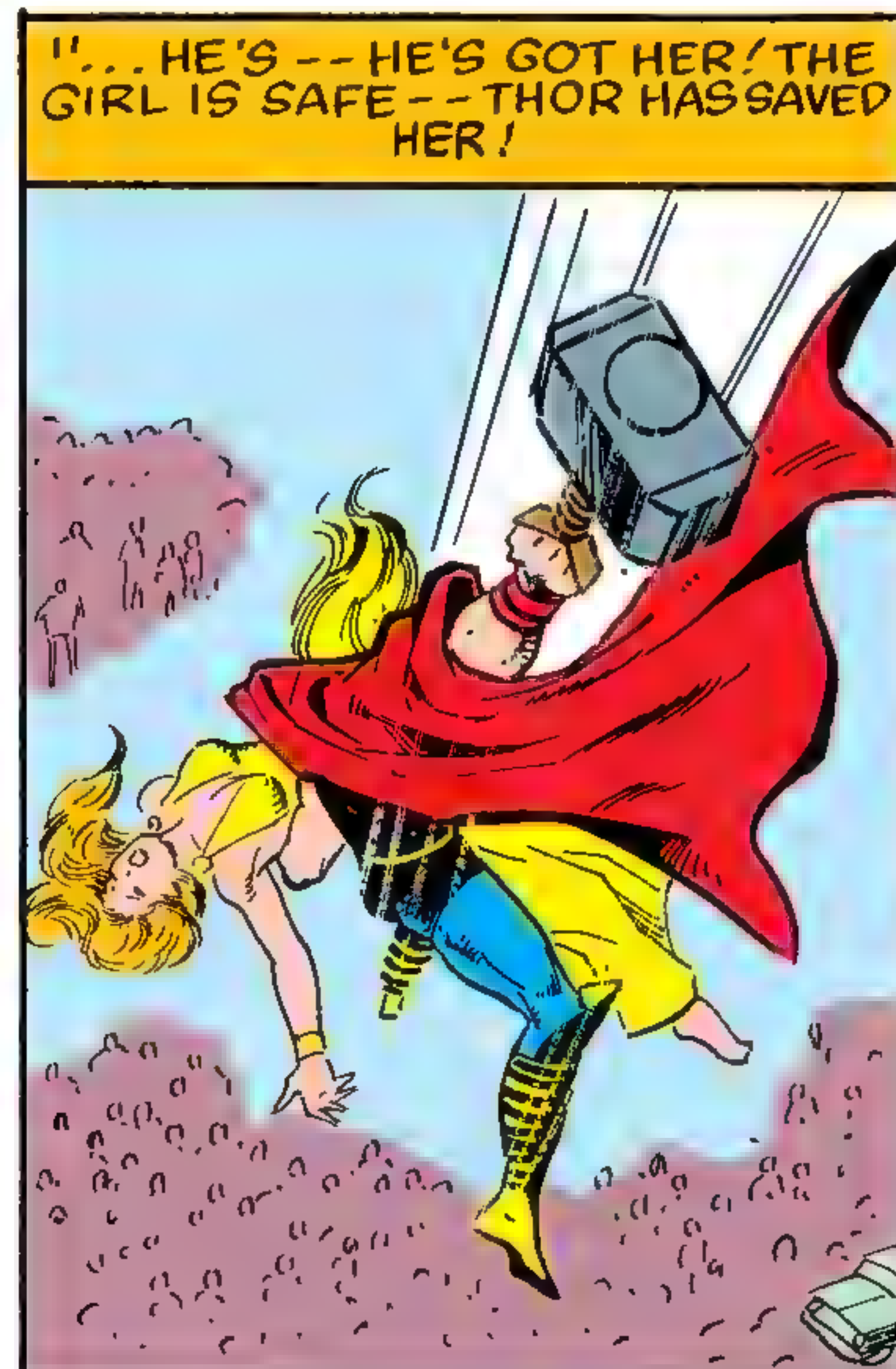
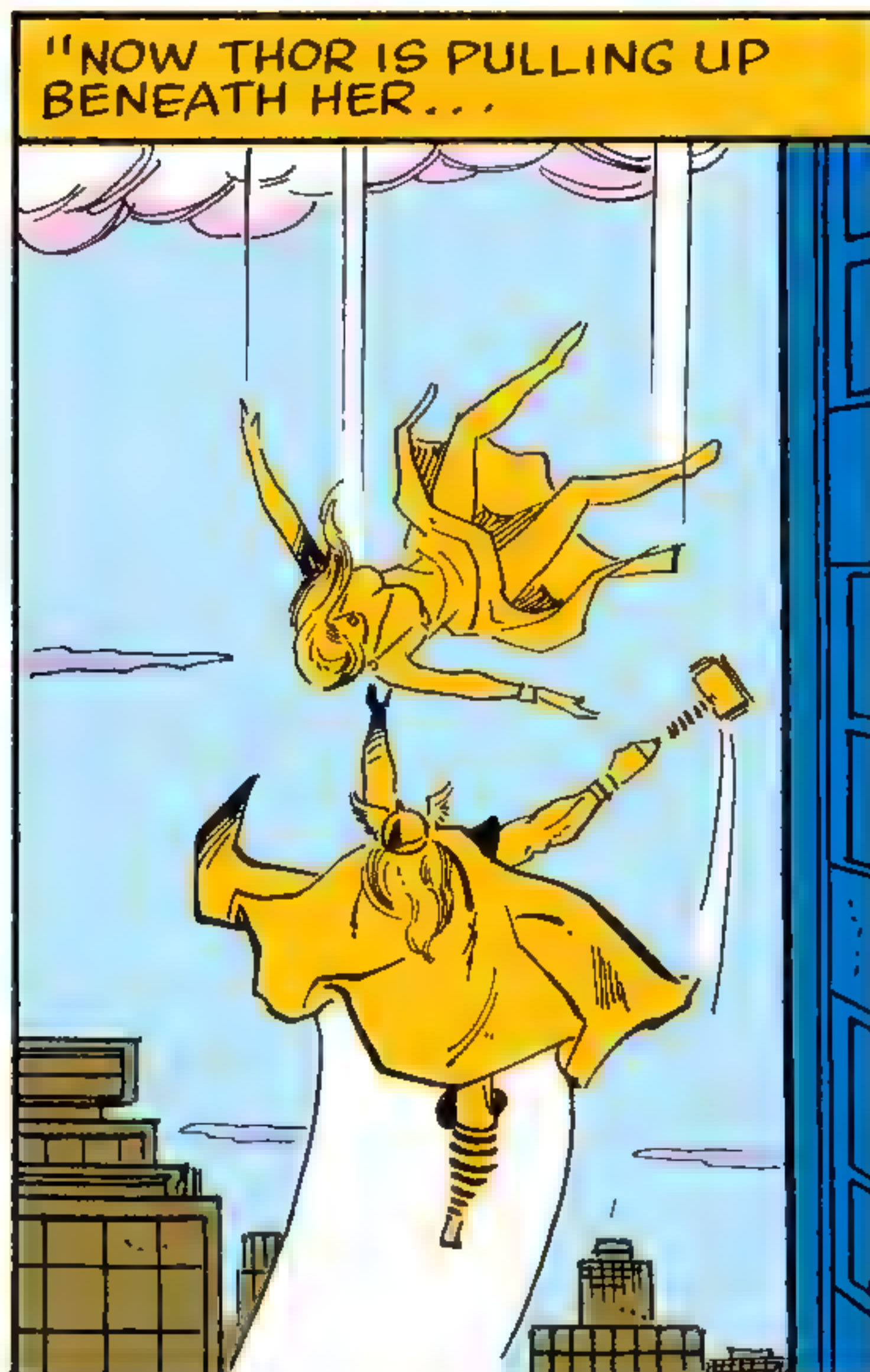
... TROUBLED
IN SPIRIT --

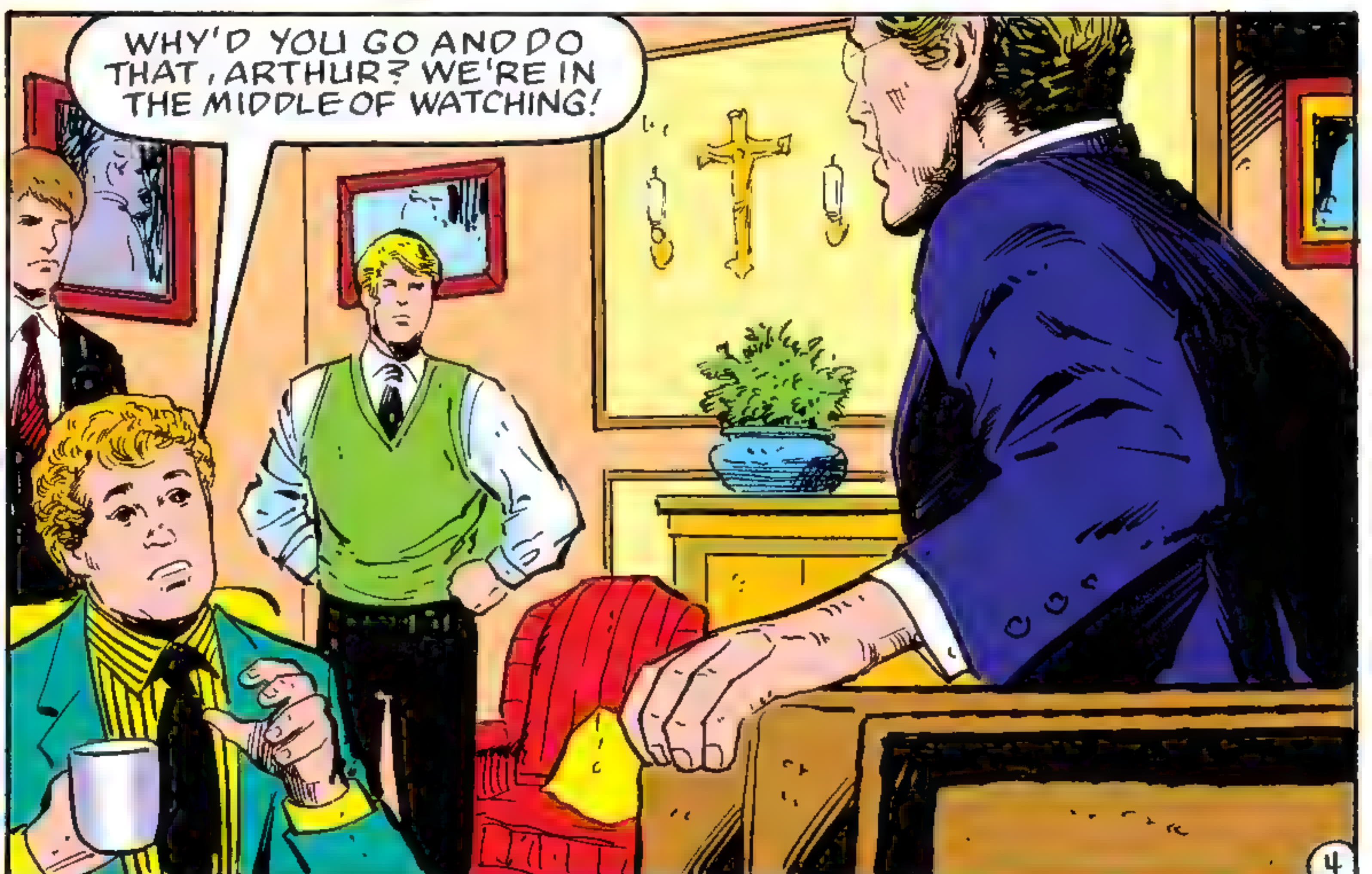
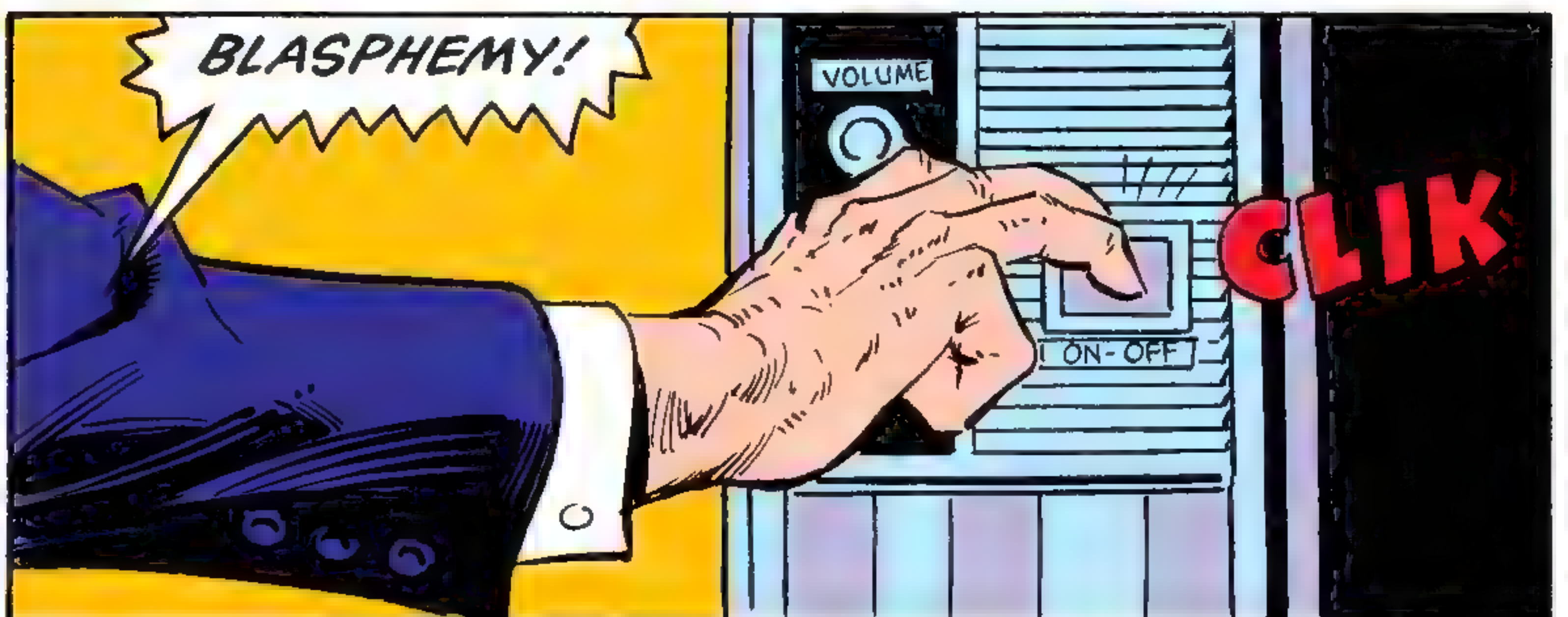
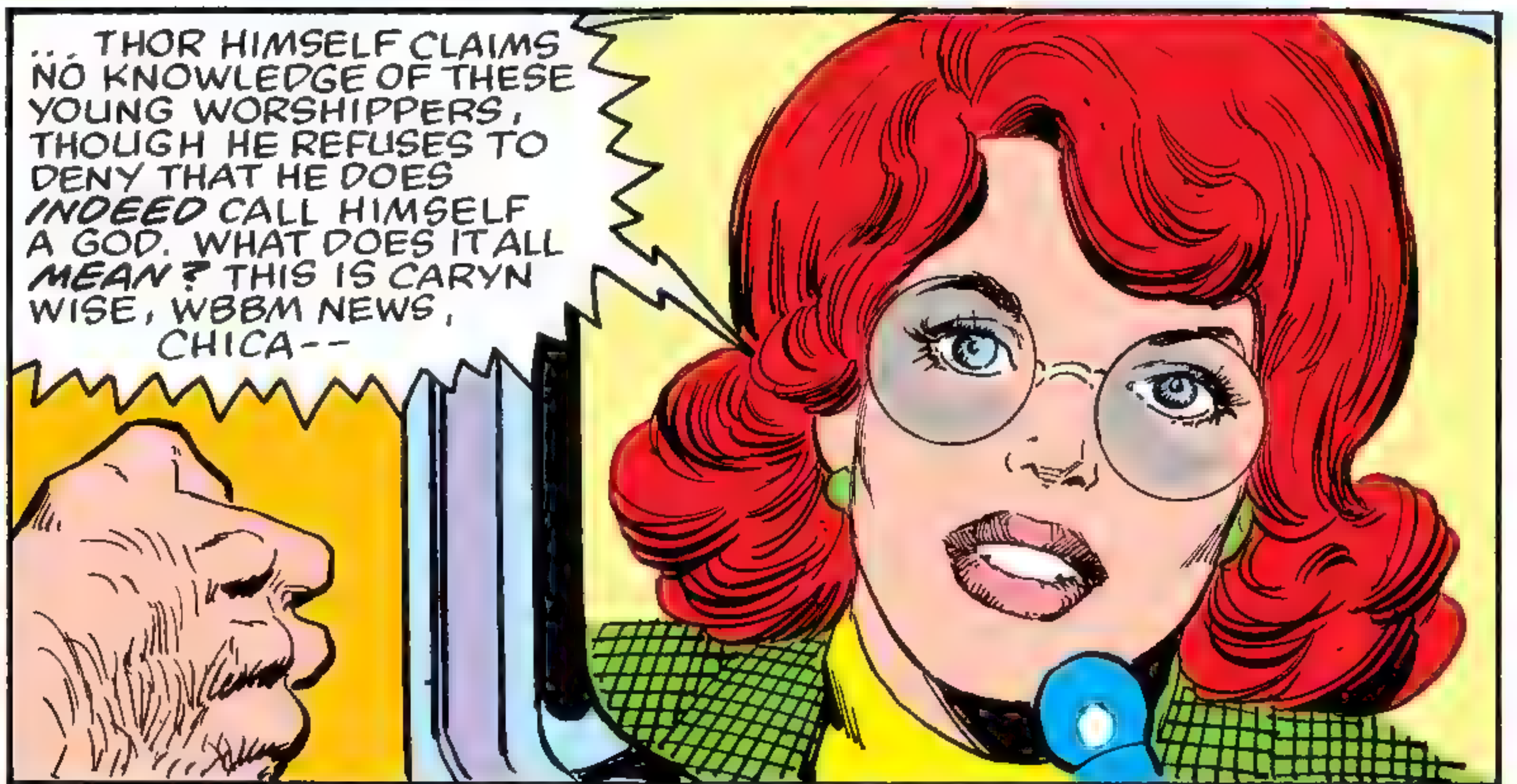
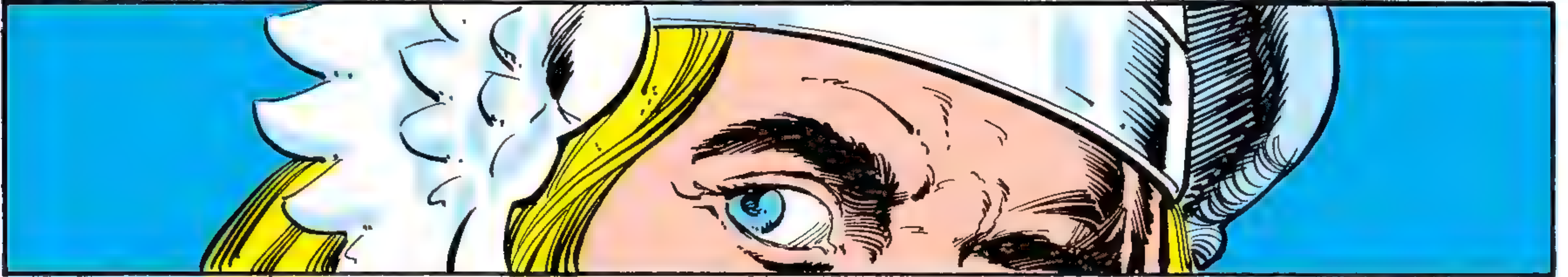
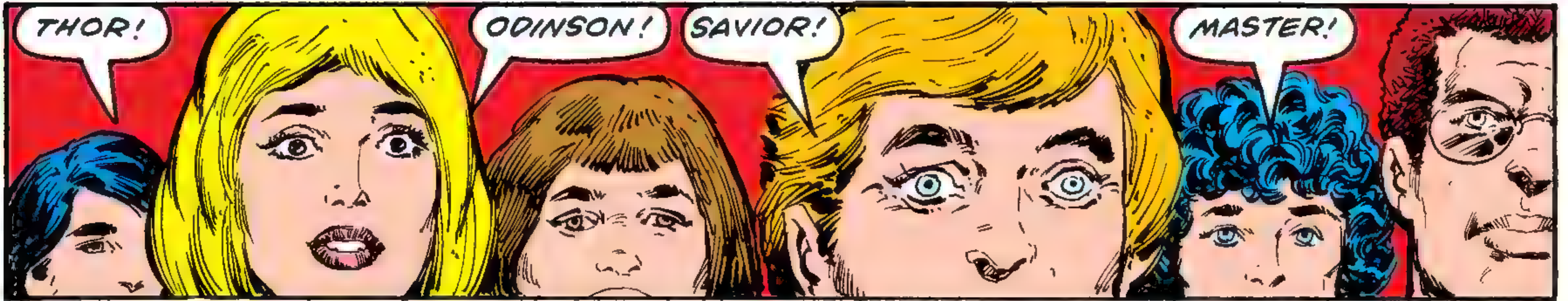
IN FAITH, I DO TRULY
LOVE THE GODDESS SIF.
YET, IF SHE CANNOT FIND
FULFILLMENT HERE ON
MIDGARD, I FEAR THAT
OUR BETROTHAL, PLEDGED
IN THE HEAVENS, MAY
BE... BROKEN.

ALAN ZELENETZ BOB HALL VINCE COLLETTA
SCRIPTER PLOTTER/PENCILER INKER
JANICE CHIANG GEORGE ROUSSOS
LETTERER COLORIST
MARK GRUENWALD JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

THE COMING OF THE **CRUSADER!**



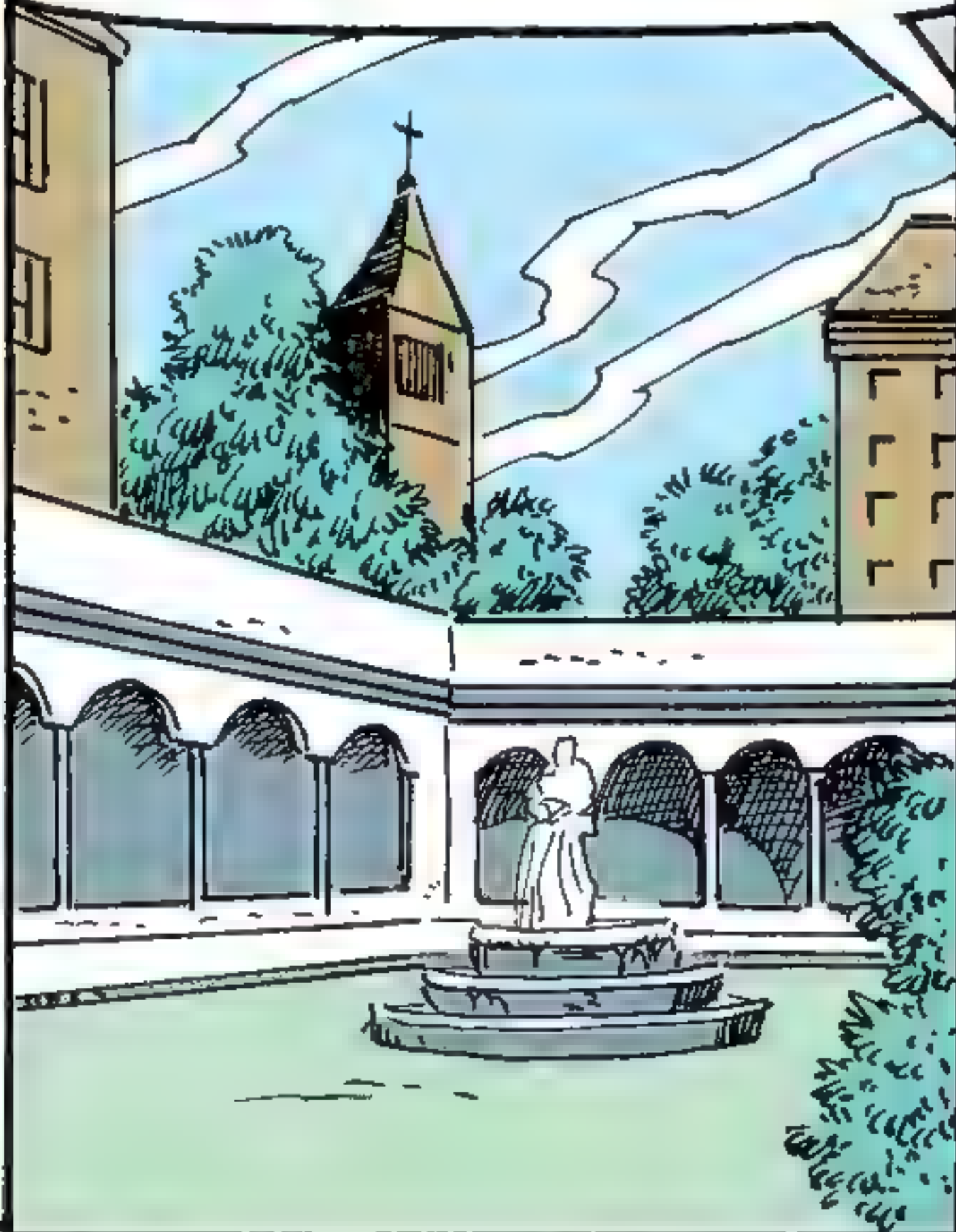




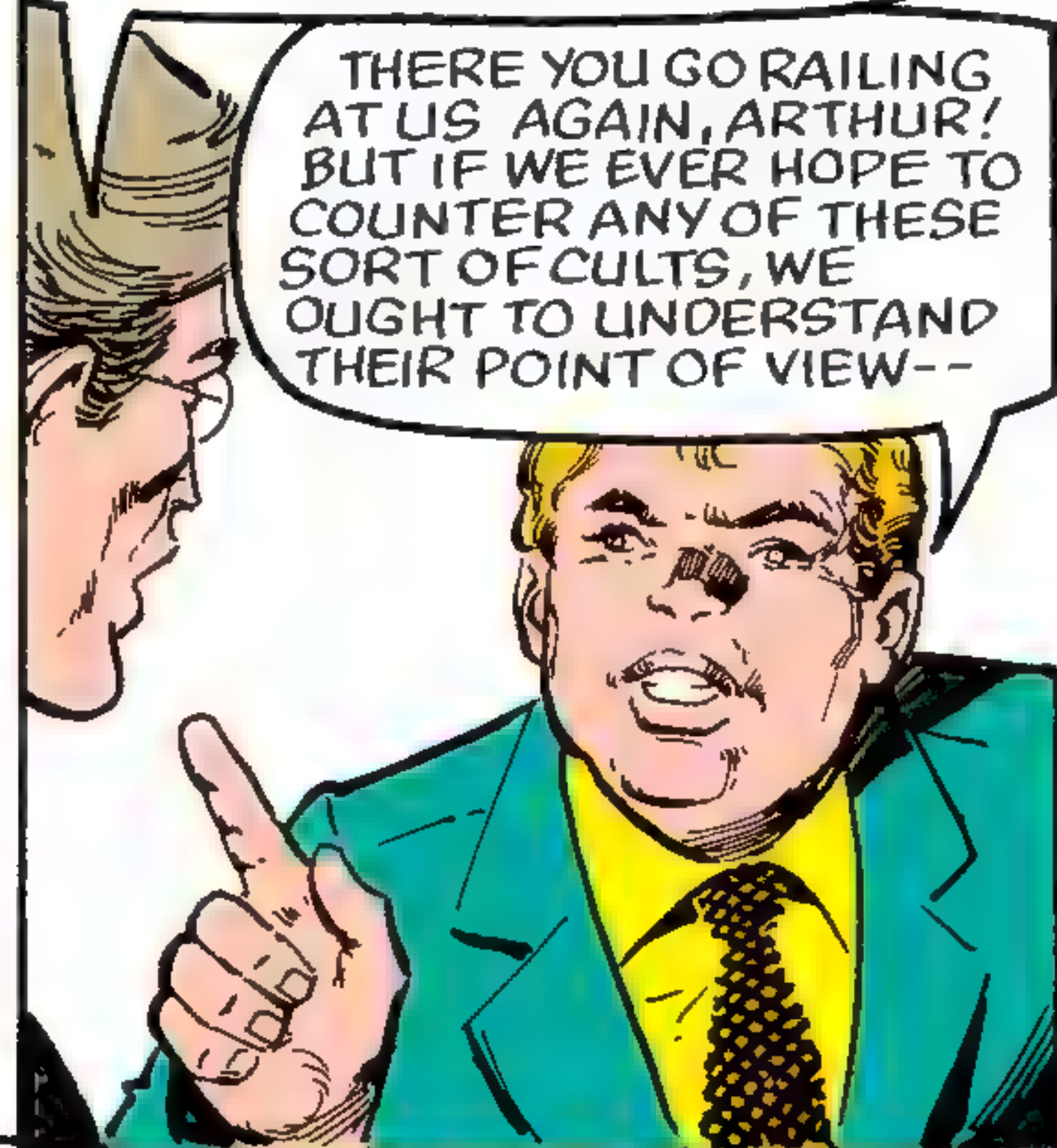
WATCHING *WHAT?* FILTH
AND SACRILEGE!?



MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER DID
NOT FOUND BLACKWOOD
SEMINARY FOR ITS HALLS TO
ECHO WITH PAGAN PROFANITY.



"IF THY BROTHER ENTICE THEE,
SAYING, LET US SERVE OTHER
GODS, THOU SHALT NOT HEARKEN
UNTO HIM! "OR HAVE YOU FOR-
GOTTEN THE GOOD BOOK?"



THERE YOU GO RAILING
AT US AGAIN, ARTHUR!
BUT IF WE EVER HOPE TO
COUNTER ANY OF THESE
SORT OF CULTS, WE
OUGHT TO UNDERSTAND
THEIR POINT OF VIEW--

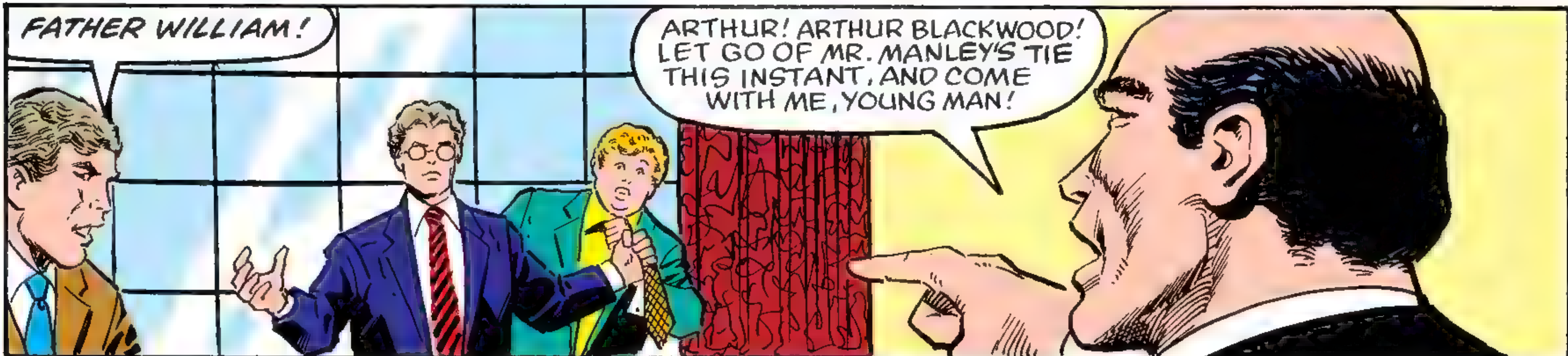
HEY!

AND GIVE THEM THE *SLIGHTEST* SHRED OF
CREDENCE AND RESPECT! NEVER! IN GOD'S
NAME, MANLEY, I'LL--



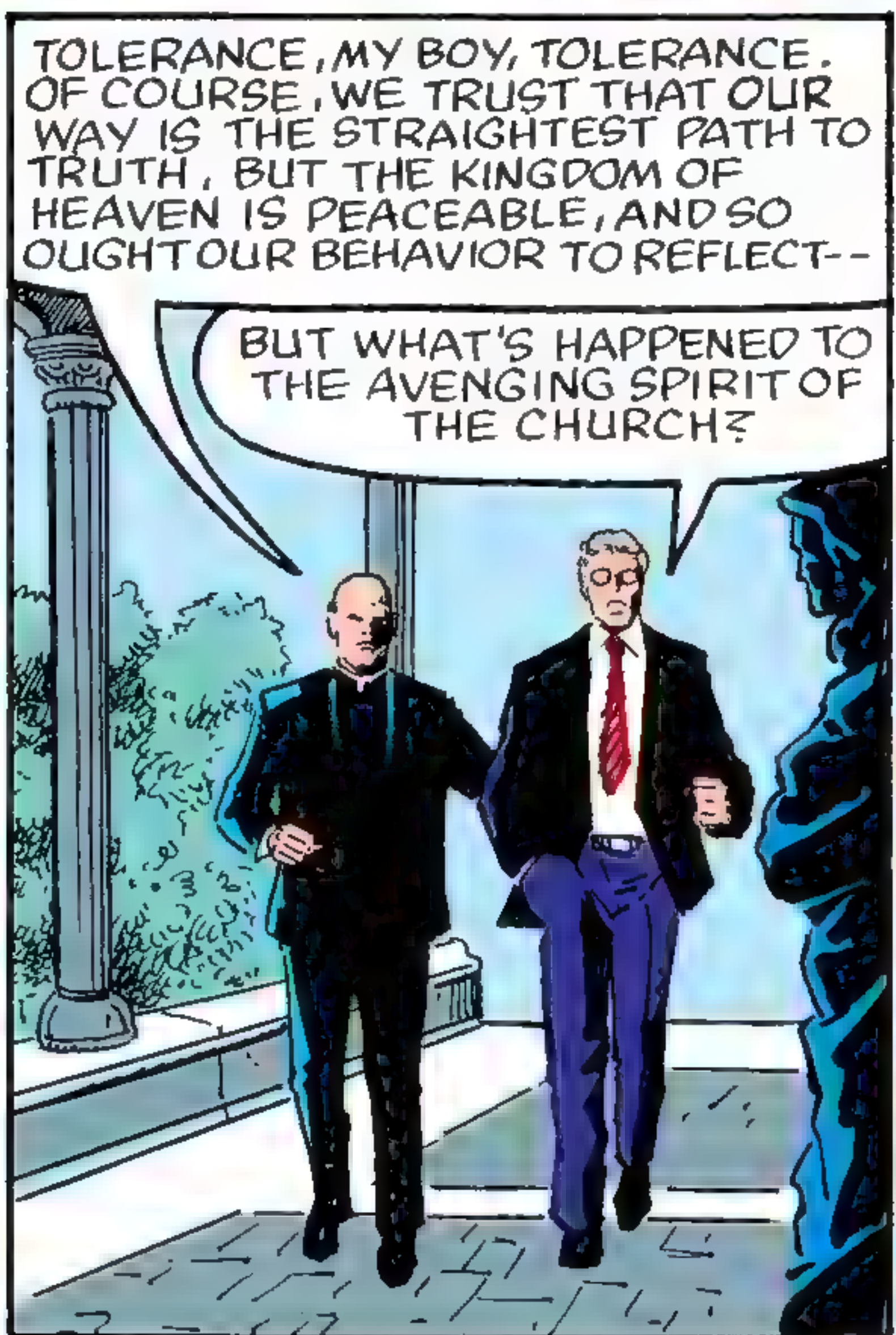
FATHER WILLIAM!

ARTHUR! ARTHUR BLACKWOOD!
LET GO OF MR. MANLEY'S TIE
THIS INSTANT, AND COME
WITH ME, YOUNG MAN!



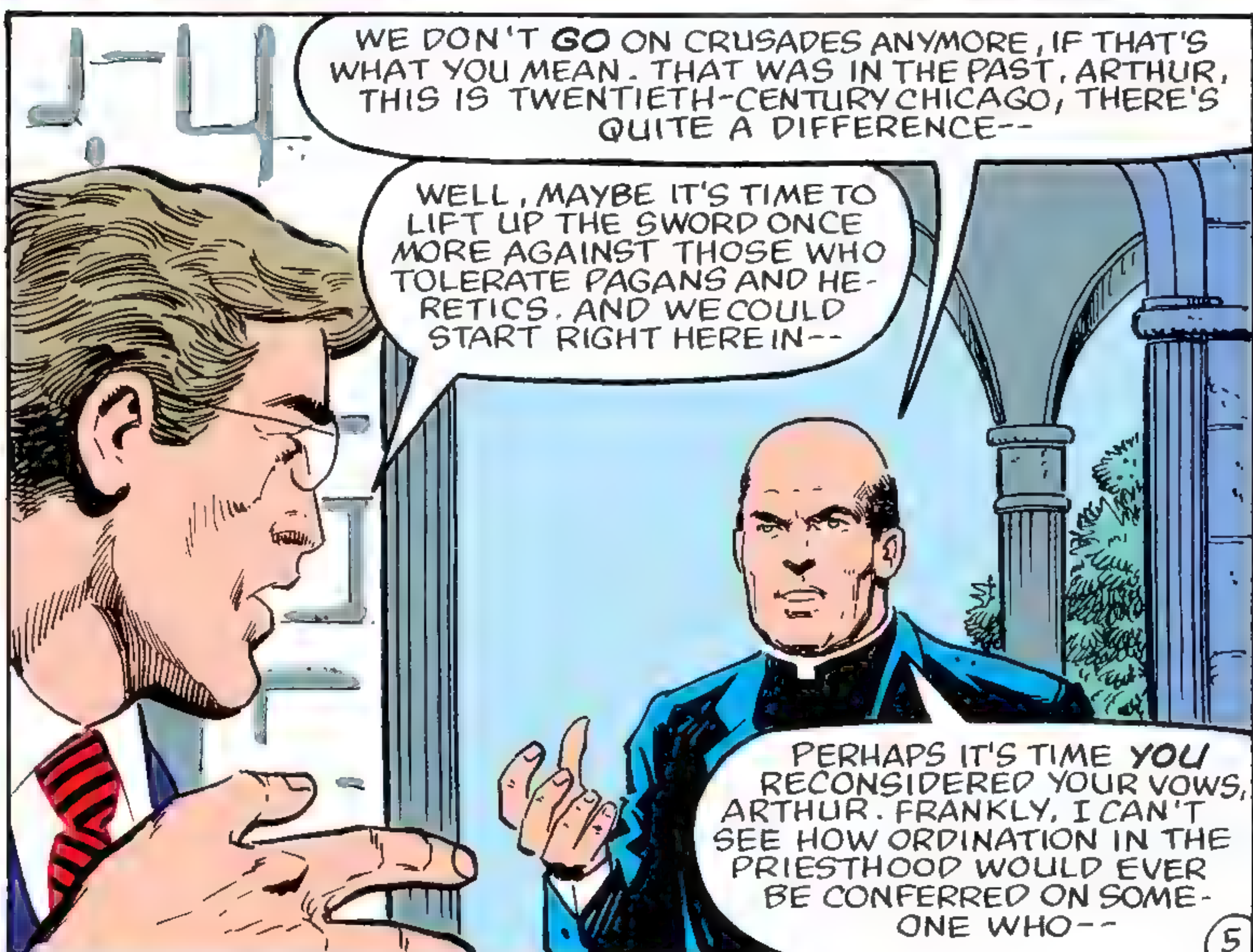
TOLERANCE, MY BOY, TOLERANCE.
OF COURSE, WE TRUST THAT OUR
WAY IS THE STRAIGHTEST PATH TO
TRUTH, BUT THE KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN IS PEACEABLE, AND SO
OUGHT OUR BEHAVIOR TO REFLECT--

BUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO
THE AVENGING SPIRIT OF
THE CHURCH?



WE DON'T GO ON CRUSADES ANYMORE, IF THAT'S
WHAT YOU MEAN. THAT WAS IN THE PAST, ARTHUR,
THIS IS TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHICAGO, THERE'S
QUITE A DIFFERENCE--

WELL, MAYBE IT'S TIME TO
LIFT UP THE SWORD ONCE
MORE AGAINST THOSE WHO
TOLERATE PAGANS AND HE-
RETICS. AND WE COULD
START RIGHT HERE IN--



PERHAPS IT'S TIME YOU
RECONSIDERED YOUR VOWS,
ARTHUR. FRANKLY, I CAN'T
SEE HOW ORDINATION IN THE
PRIESTHOOD WOULD EVER
BE CONFERRED ON SOME-
ONE WHO--



LATE THAT AFTERNOON, SOME MILES EAST, ON CHICAGO'S MAGNIFICENT MILE ALONG MICHIGAN AVENUE...

... WHERE THOR, IN HIS MORTAL GUISE OF DOCTOR DONALD BLAKE RENTS PROFESSIONAL OFFICE SPACE AND AN APARTMENT...

AS SOON AS NURSE STEVENS LEAVES FOR THE DAY I CAN TRANSFORM TO THOR AS SIF PREFERS IT.

SOUP'S ON, SIF.

BUT I WANT NO BROTH.

NO, NO, THAT'S JUST AN EXPRESSION-- IT MEANS 'THE FOOD'S READY! DO YOU WANT KETCHUP ON YOUR SCRAMBLED EGGS?

MAYOR BYRNE AND MORE NEWS ON THOR WHEN WE RETURN.

HA! THAT IS A COMIC NAME, 'SCRAMBLED EGGS', DOST THOU NOT THINK SO?

SIF, YOU PROMISED YOU'D REMEMBER TO SAY 'YOU' AND NOT 'THOU'!

DOST YOU NOT THINK SO?

"DO YOU NOT THINK SO..."

BY FRIGGA'S HEARTH, THOU ART TOO DEMANDING OF ME, DONALD BLAKE. BUT WHAT DOST THOU THINK OF THOSE WHO WORSHIPPED THEE AS THOR THIS DAY?

THAT WAS *REALLY* UNCOMFORTABLE. IT'S BEEN *CENTURIES* SINCE I HAD SUCH AN EXPERIENCE. IT WAS JUST... ALL OUT OF PLACE.

WOULDEST THOU DENY THAT MY BELOVED PRINCE AND GLORIOUS THOR DESERVES SUCH REVERENCE FROM MORTALS?

SIF, I'VE COME TO EARTH TO *HELP* MEN AND WOMEN, NOT TO BE *REVERED*. LIFE IS A STRUGGLE FOR SO MANY OF THEM, A WEARISOME TOILING, DAY-IN AND DAY-OUT.

THOR OFFERS THEM... ASSISTANCE EVERY SO OFTEN, LENDS THEM SUPPORT... I GUESS A LITTLE EXTRA PROTECTION AGAINST THE CHAOS OF MODERN LIFE... BUT...



HA! I'M BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE A DEODORANT COMMERCIAL!

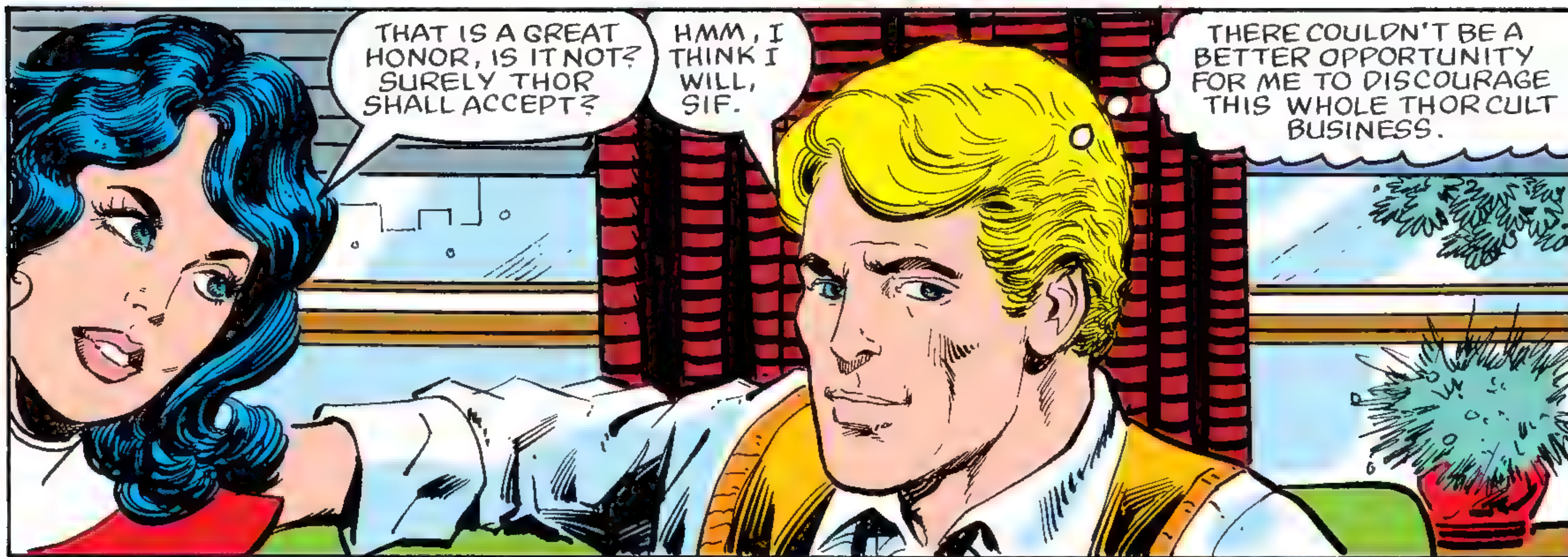
SHHH! LISTEN--



AND SO, IN RECOGNITION OF THOR'S ASSISTANCE TO OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT EARLIER TODAY IN PREVENTING WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A TERRIBLE TRAGEDY, AND IN GRATITUDE FOR HIS HAVING CHOSEN OUR KIND OF TOWN AS HIS KIND OF TOWN...



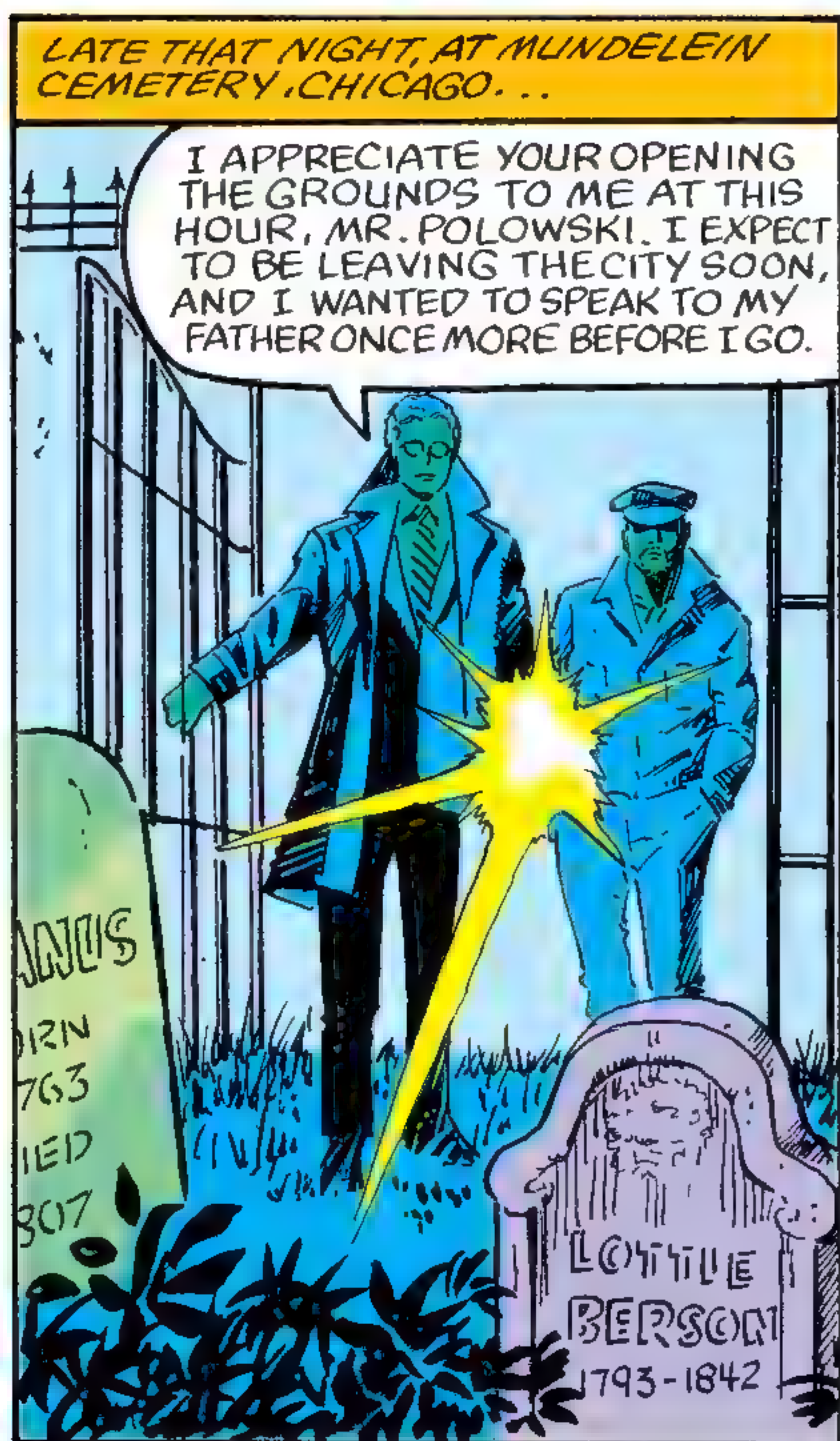
... WE WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT HIM, TOMORROW EVENING, WITH THE KEY TO CHICAGO. THOR, IF YOU ARE LISTENING, PLEASE CONTACT MYSELF, **MAYOR BYRNE**, AT CITY HALL TO LET US KNOW OF YOUR ACCEPTANCE.



THAT IS A GREAT HONOR, IS IT NOT? SURELY THOR SHALL ACCEPT?

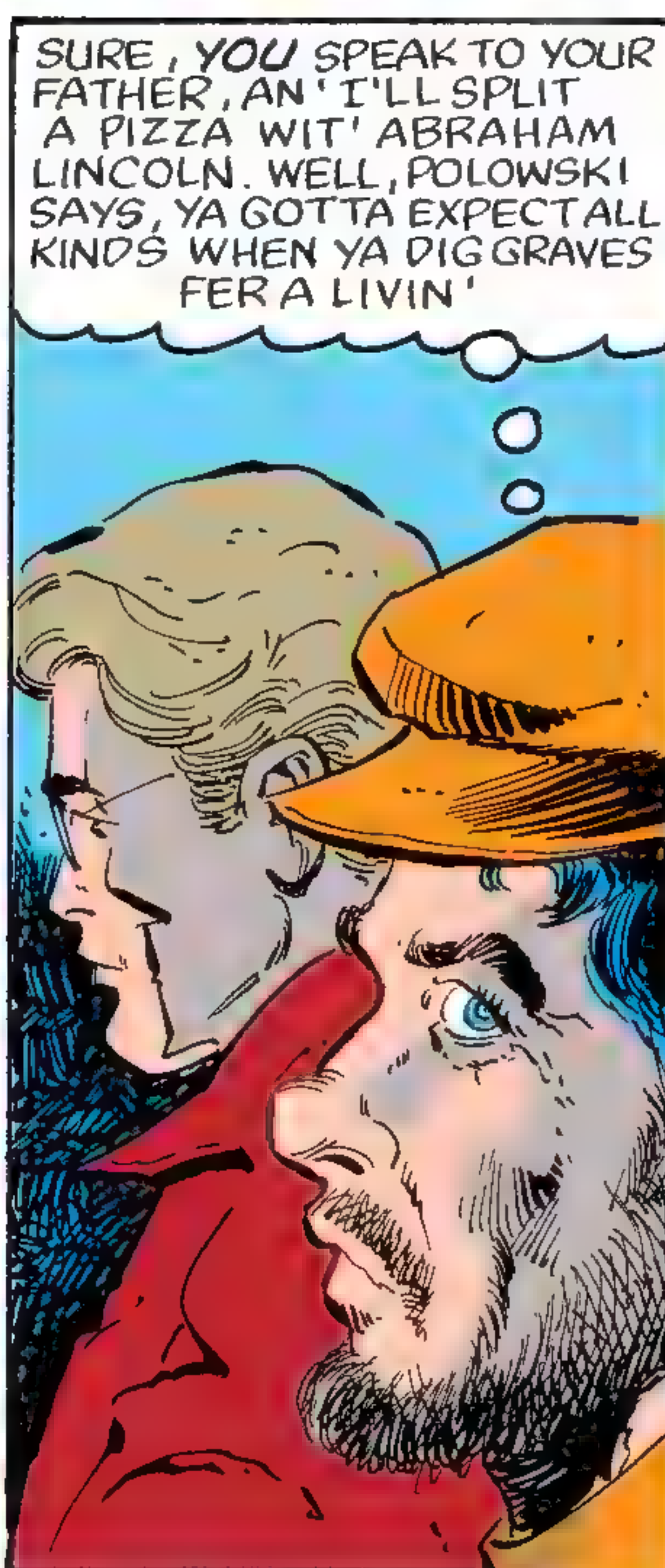
HMM, I THINK I WILL, SIF.

THERE COULDN'T BE A BETTER OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO DISCOURAGE THIS WHOLE THOR CULT BUSINESS.



LATE THAT NIGHT, AT MUNDELEIN CEMETERY, CHICAGO...

I APPRECIATE YOUR OPENING THE GROUNDS TO ME AT THIS HOUR, MR. POLOWSKI. I EXPECT TO BE LEAVING THE CITY SOON, AND I WANTED TO SPEAK TO MY FATHER ONCE MORE BEFORE I GO.

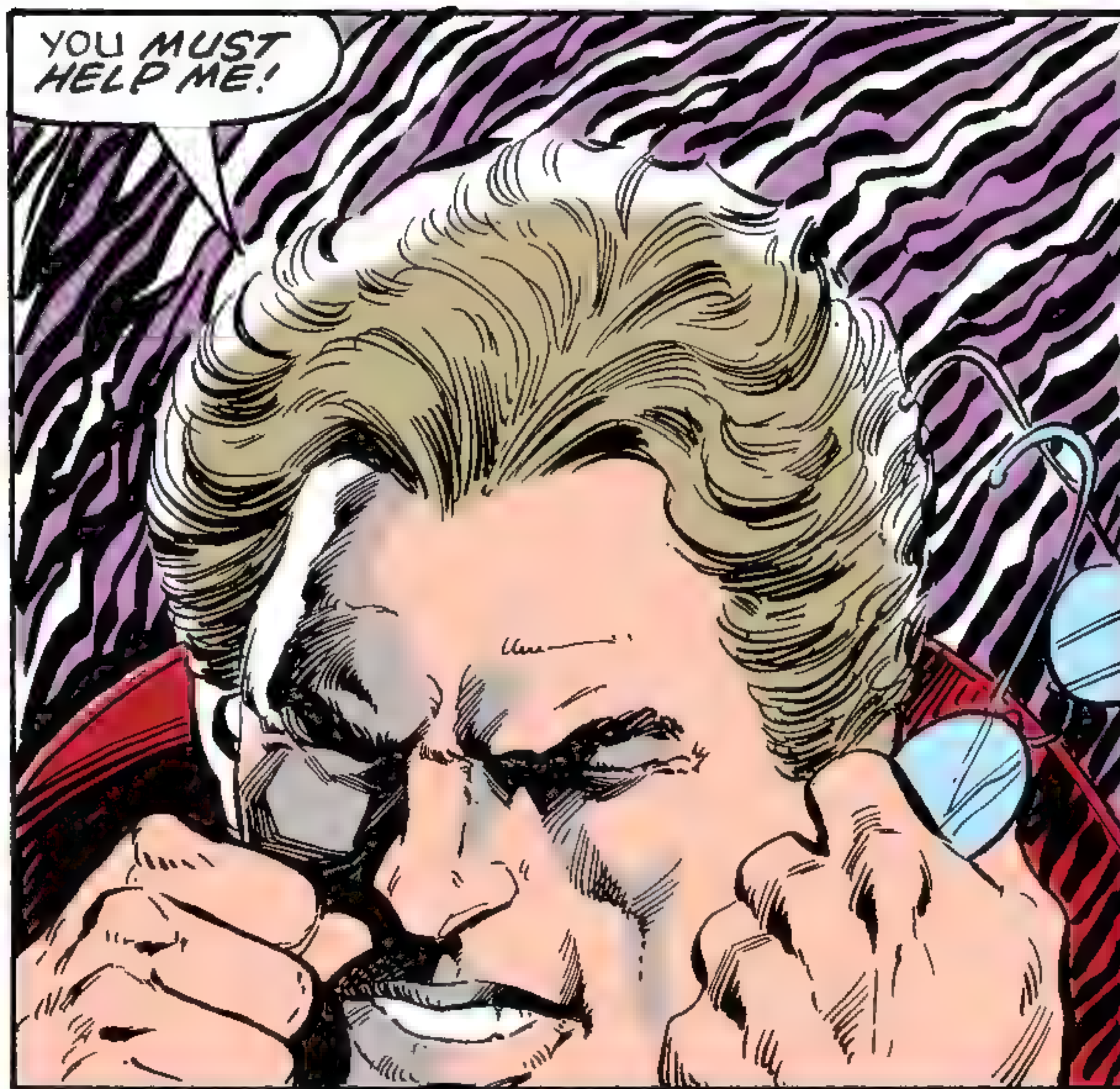
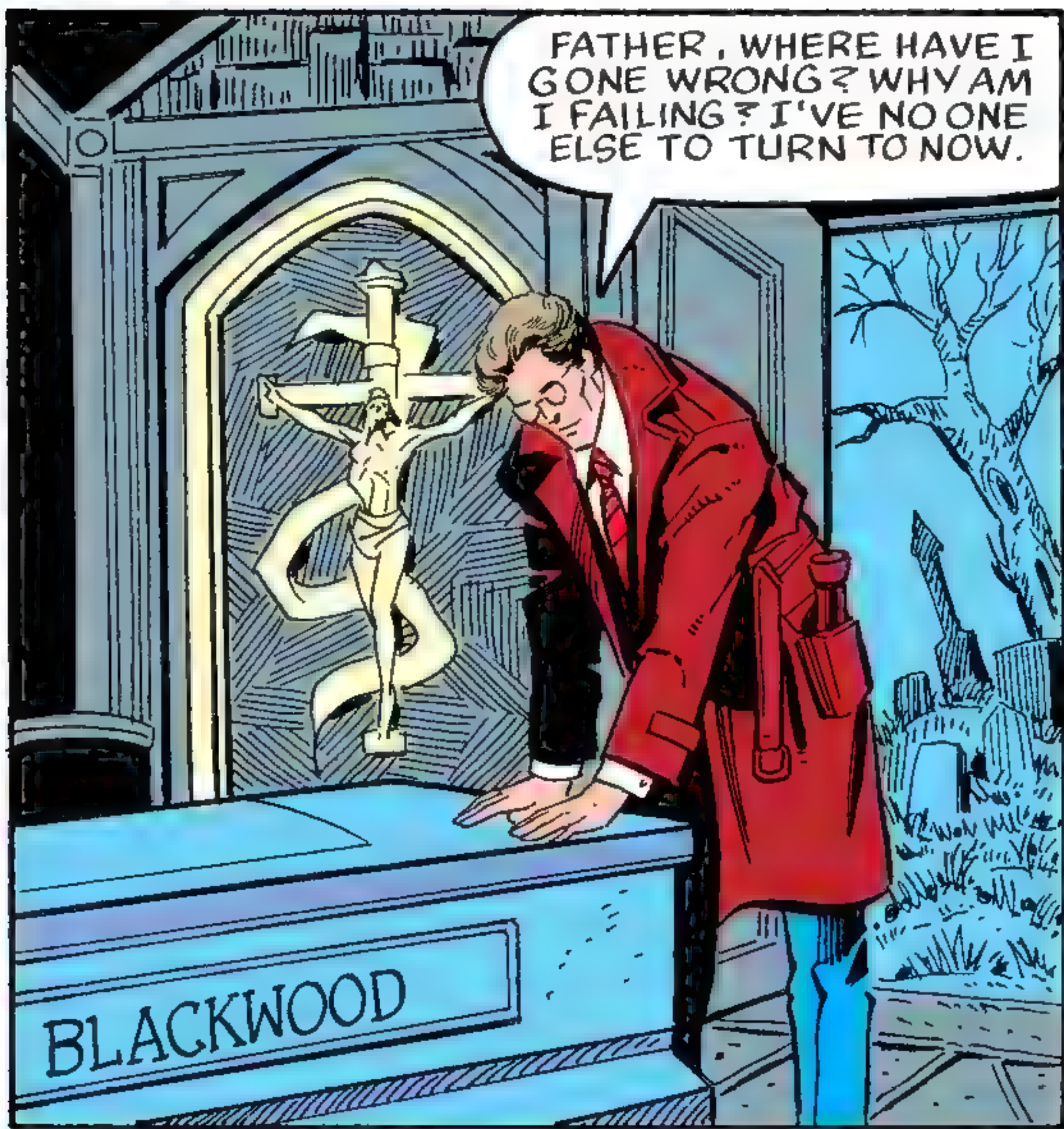


SURE, YOU SPEAK TO YOUR FATHER, AN' I'LL SPLIT A PIZZA WIT' ABRAHAM LINCOLN. WELL, POLOWSKI SAYS, YA GOTTA EXPECT ALL KINDS WHEN YA DIG GRAVES FER A LIVIN'

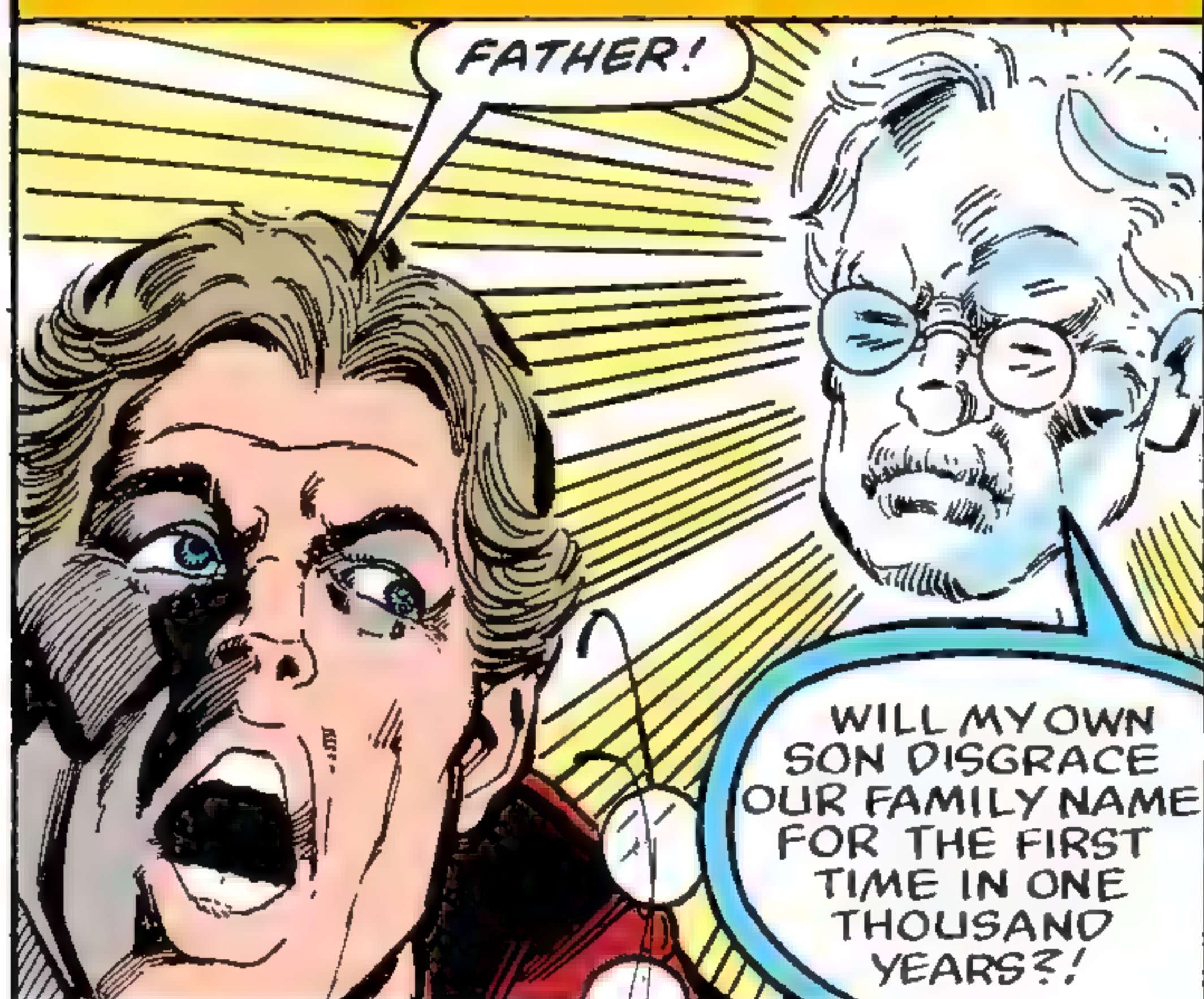


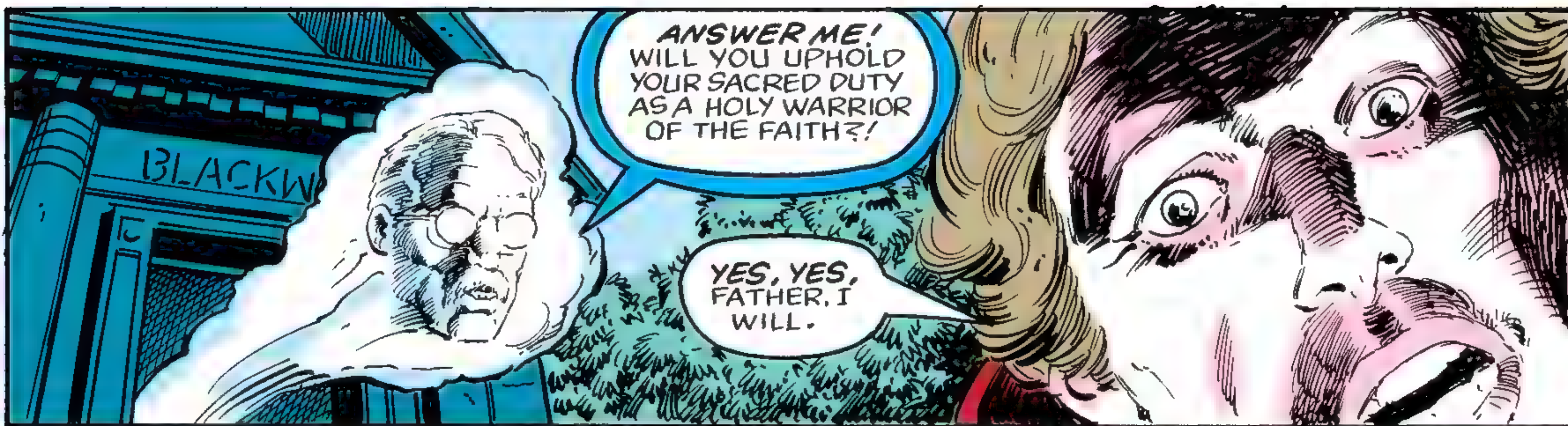
I'LL BE OUT IN A FEW MOMENTS.

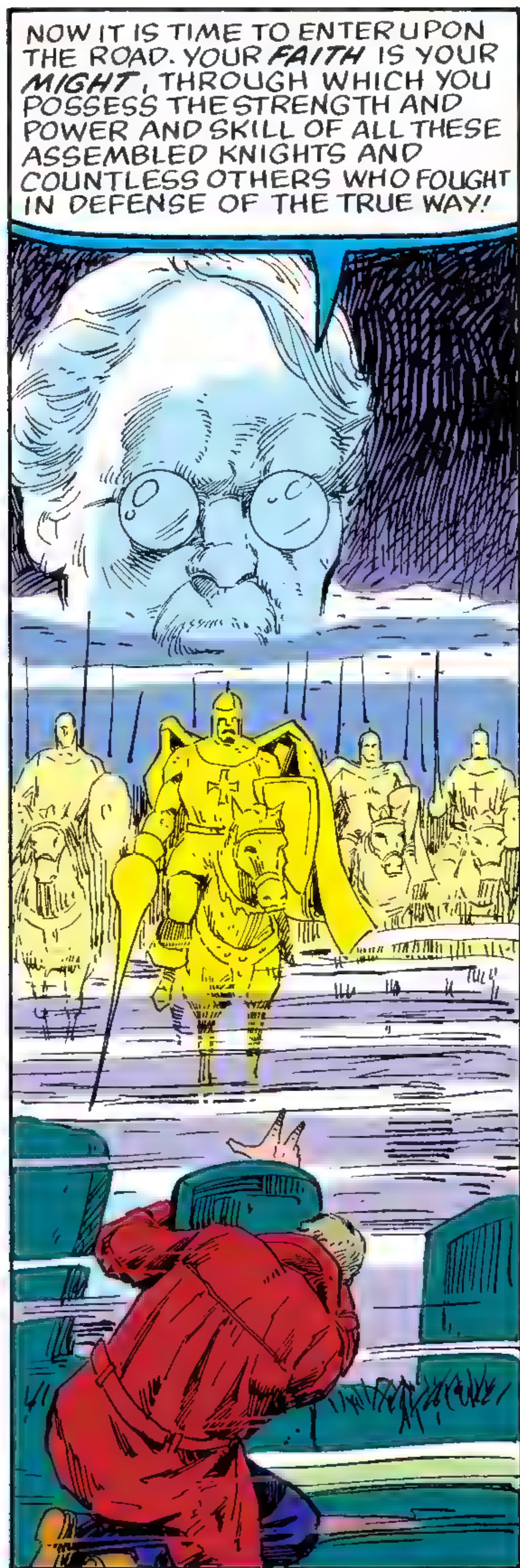
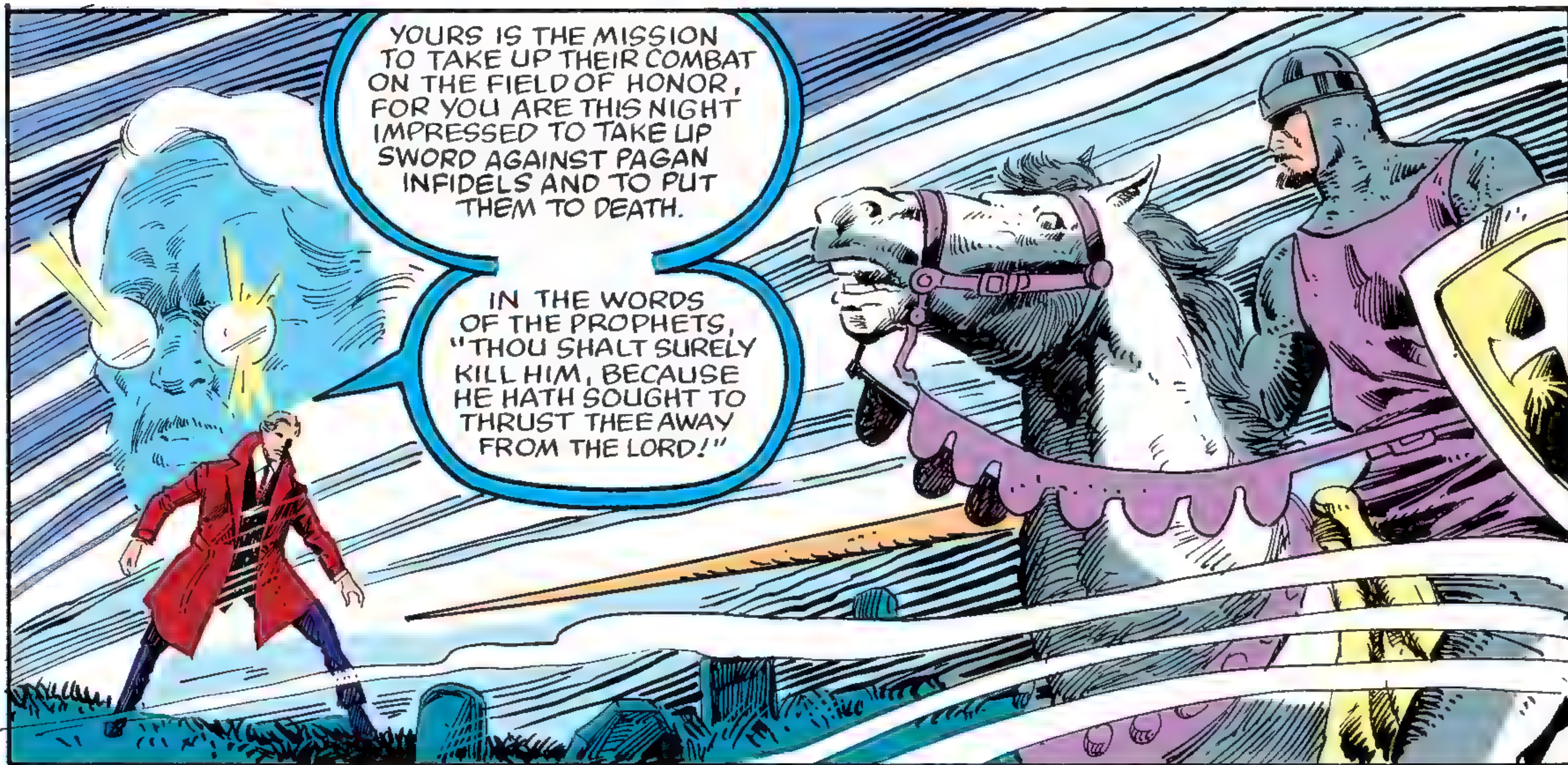
THAT'S OKAY, TAKE YER TIME. UH, SAY HELLO FER ME, TOO.

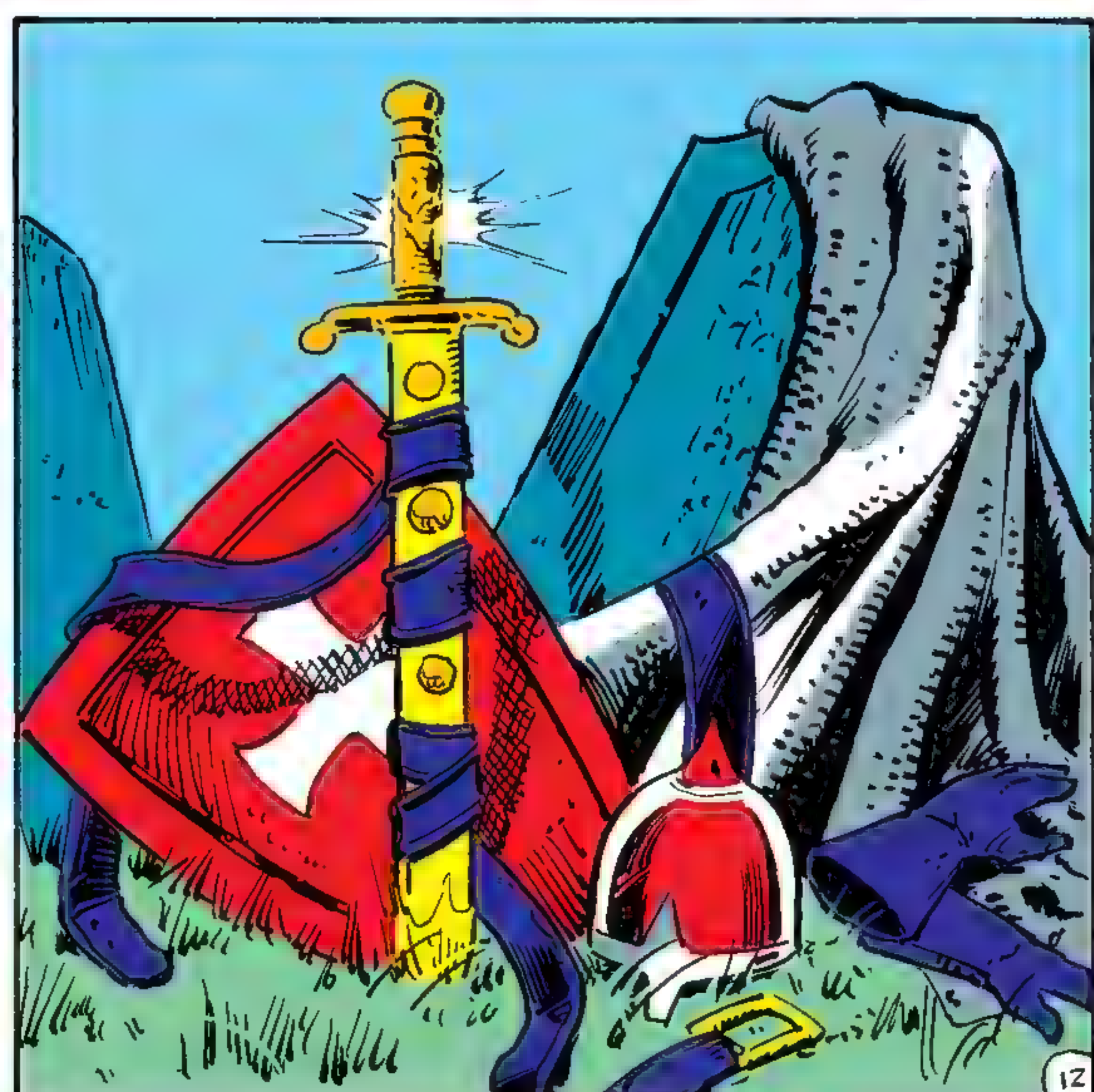


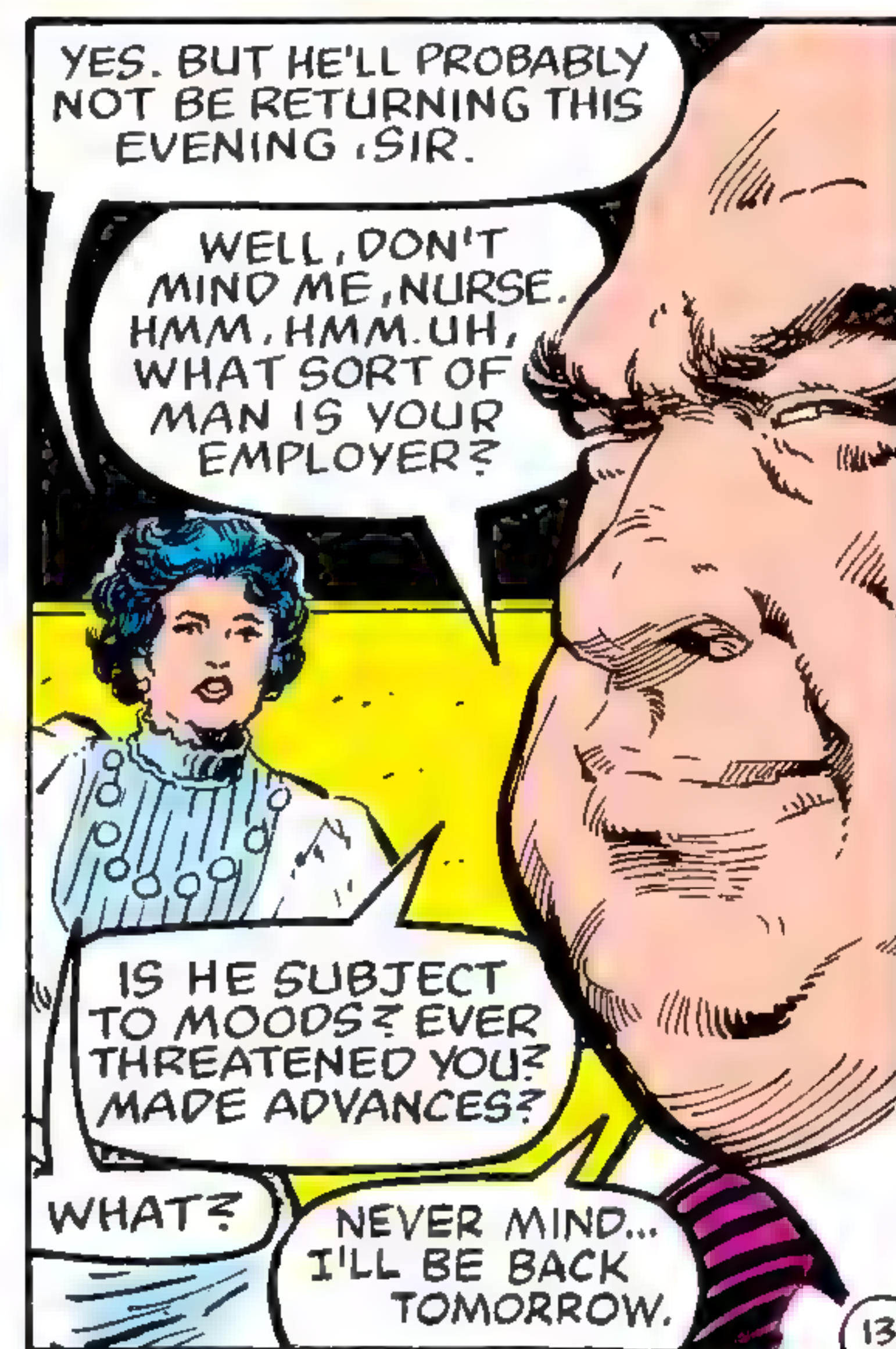
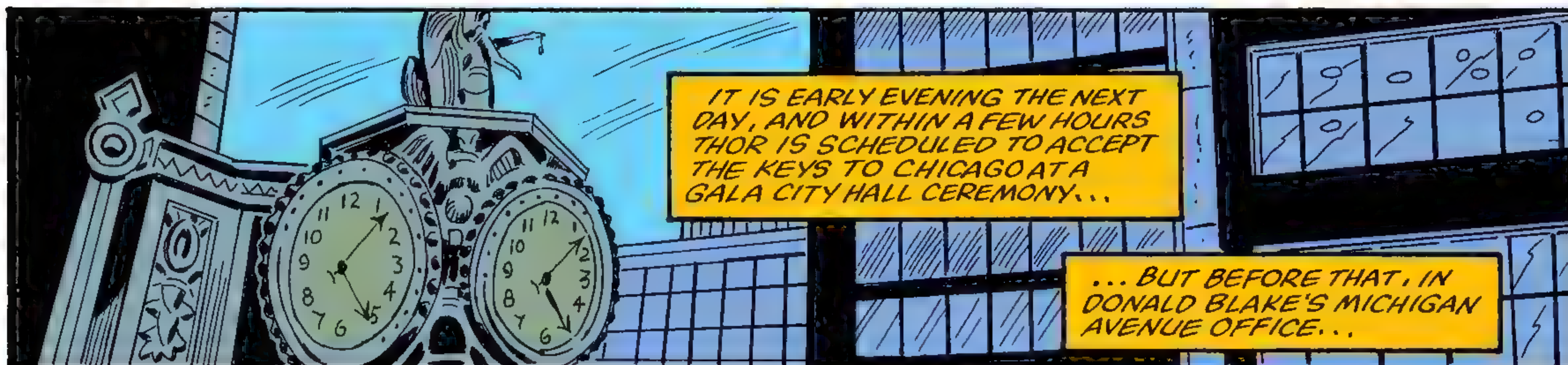
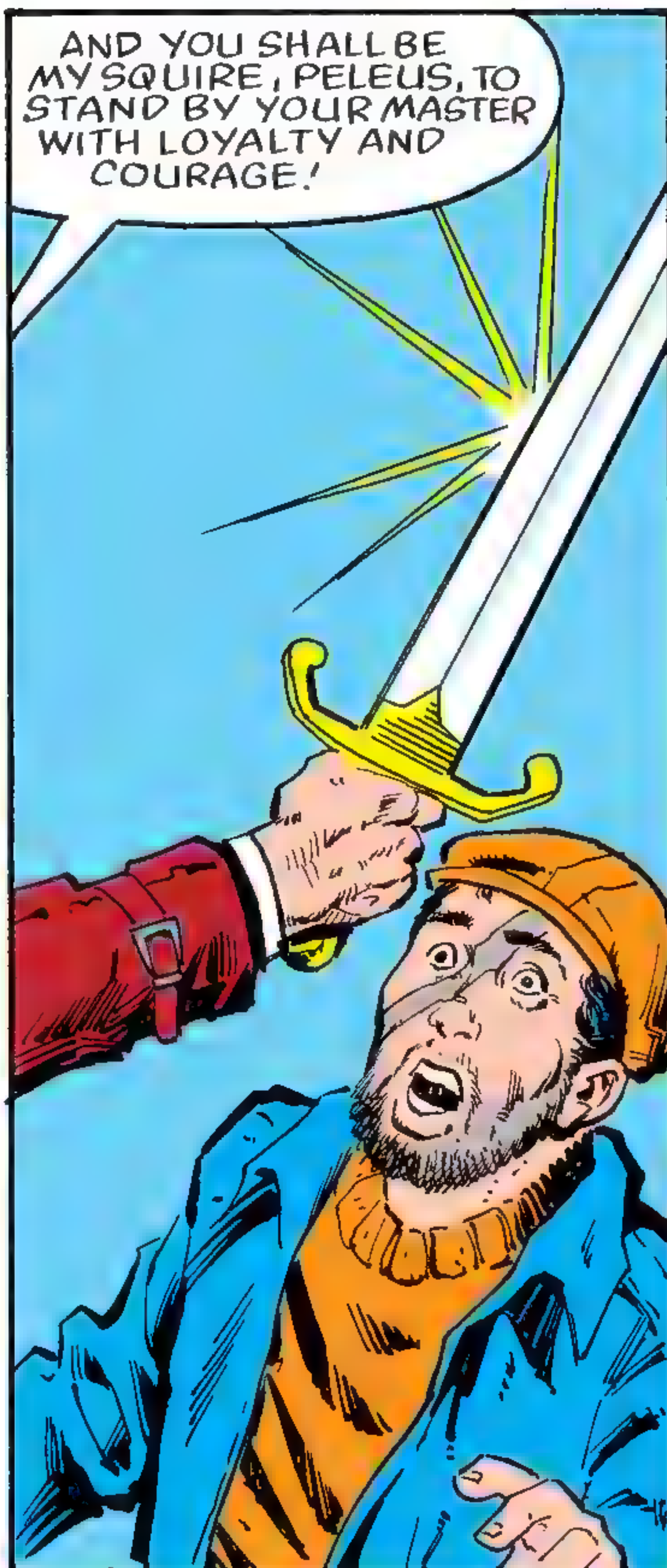
OPENING HIS EYES, ARTHUR BLACKWOOD IS ASTOUNDED TO SEE HIS OWN FEVERED FAITH AND DESPERATE CONVICTIONS TAKE CONCRETE FORM AS THE ACTUAL IMAGE OF HIS FATHER APPEARS HOVERING IN THE AIR ABOVE HIM --



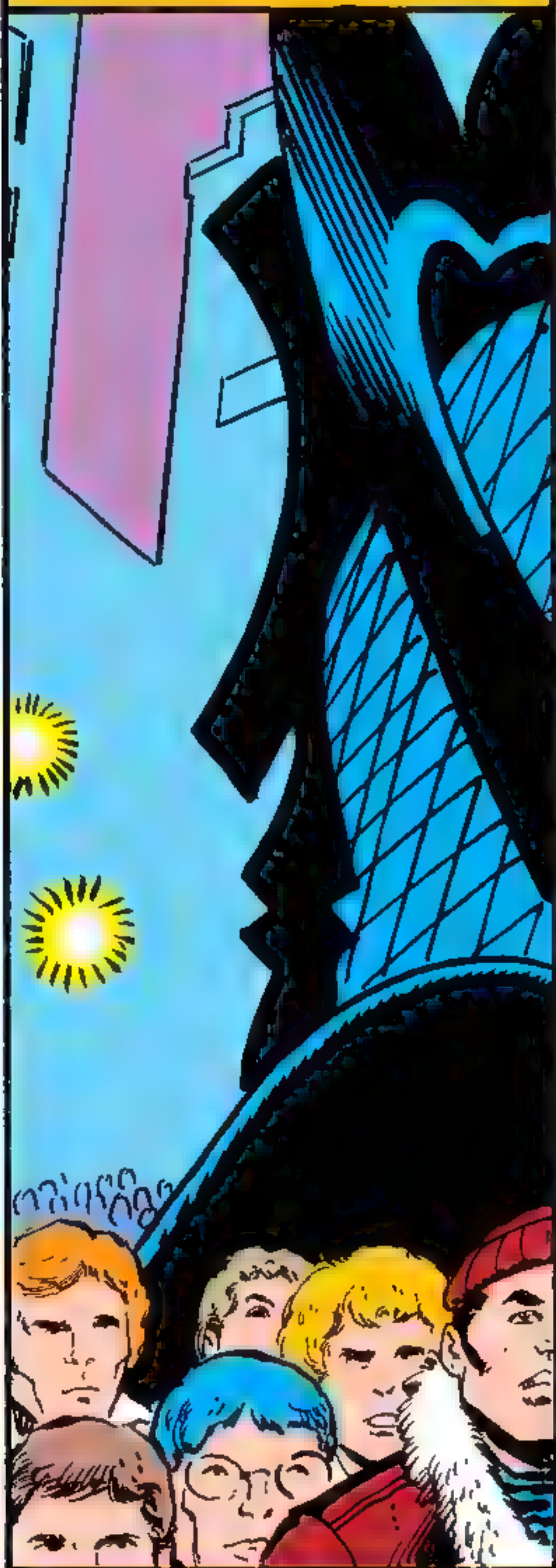




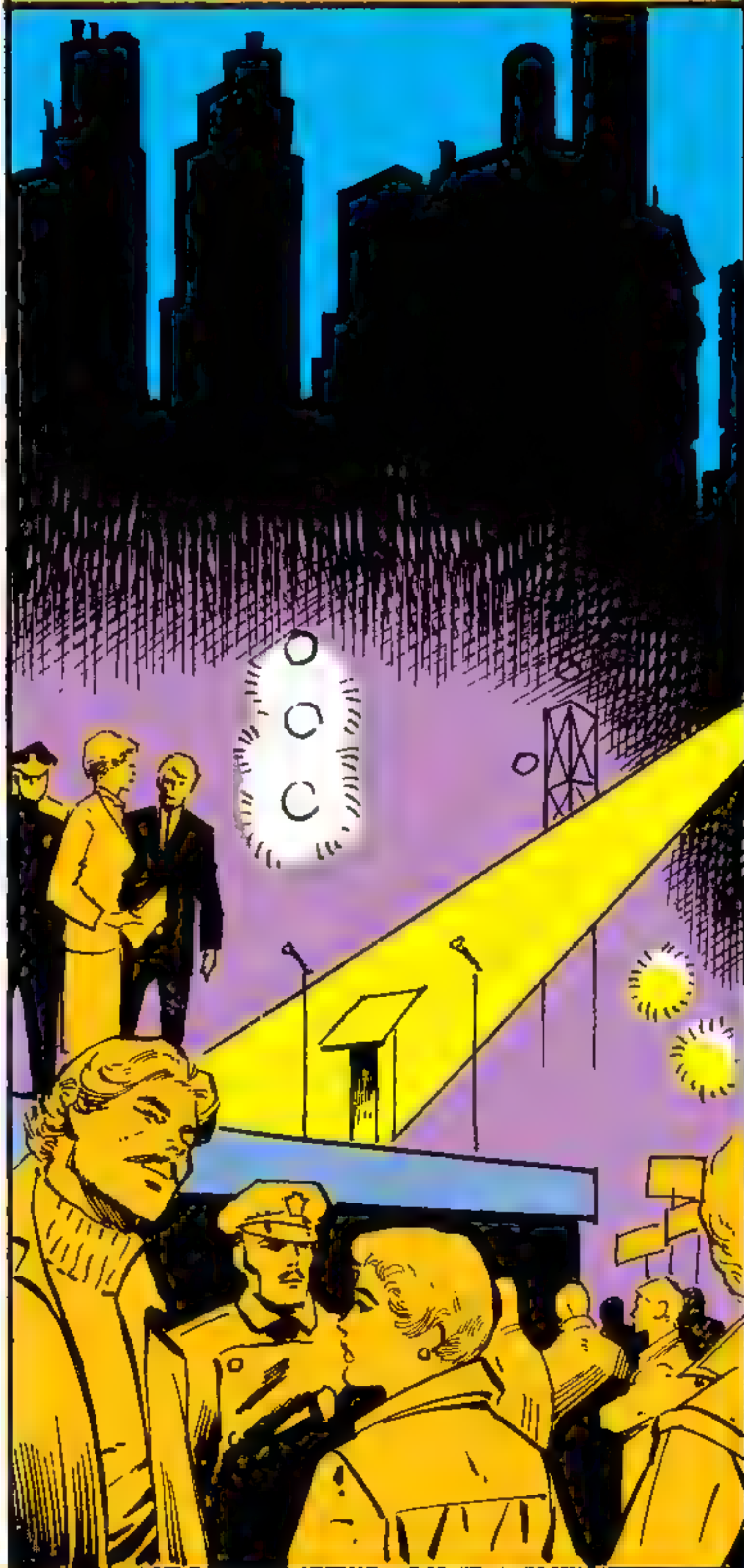




SEVERAL HOURS LATER, THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE FILL THE PLAZA OF THE RICHARD J. DALEY CIVIC CENTER NEAR CHICAGO CITY HALL...



LIGHTS BLARE AND TV CAMERAS WHIR WHILE THOR'S ARRIVAL IS AWAITED MOMENTARILY...



... WITH HOPEFUL EYES AND BATED BREATH BY SOME...



... WITH OATHS AND ANGRY GESTURES BY OTHERS...

HEAVEN, YES! HEATHENS, NO! HEAVEN, YES!



... AND THE CROWD IS STILL GROWING. BUT WHILE WE'RE WAITING FOR THIS EVENING'S GUEST OF HONOR TO ARRIVE, WE'VE BEEN ASKING SOME OF THE PEOPLE GATHERED HERE WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT THOR'S CLAIMS TO DIVINITY.

CAN WE BEGIN WITH YOU, FATHER? FATHER WILLIAM BOYLAN OF BLACKWOOD SEMINARY--

SPEAKING FOR MYSELF ALONE, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THOR HAS SAID ANYTHING THAT PUTS HIM IN CONFLICT WITH THE CHURCH. AS FOR ACCOUNTING FOR HIS UNIQUE POWERS, I'M WILLING TO HEAR HIM OUT IN AN APPROPRIATE FORUM BEFORE I MAKE UP MY MIND.



WELL, AH BELIEVE, AFTER PREACHIN' THE GOSPEL FER MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, THAT THERE IS ONLY **ONE** GOD, AND, MAKE NO MISTAKES ABOUT IT, THIS FELLOW THOR IS **NOT** THE LORD!



HE **IS** A VERY HAND-SOME MAN, AND HE DOES SEEM TO BE FOR THE PEOPLE... A GOD? MAYBE A MATINEE IDOL OF SORTS...



JUST ANOTHER OF YOUR MACHO SUPER HEROES PARADING AROUND WITH AN EGO THE SIZE OF A ZEPPELIN!



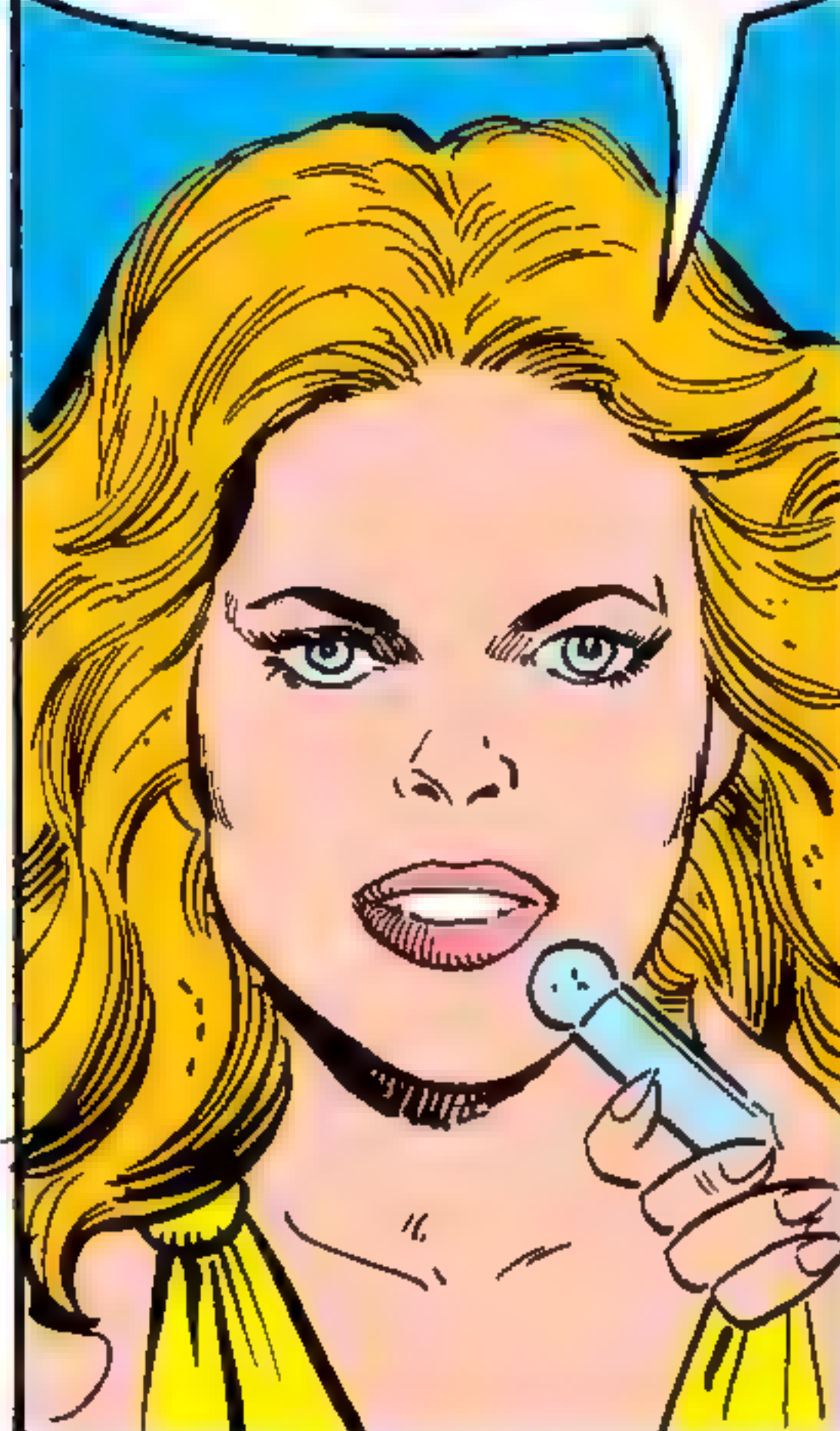
HEY, HE'S NO SLOUCH! I ONCE SEEN HIM LIFT A BUS-- YA BELIEVE THAT? A BUS! CAN I SAY HI TO MY MOM? HEY, HI MOM, IT'S ME, LENNY!



I FIND IT INCREDIBLE THAT SOME CIRCUS STRONGMAN IN TIGHTS CAN COME TO CHICAGO AND ALIENATE OUR CHILDREN JUST LIKE THAT. I WOULDN'T BE ONE BIT SURPRISED IF HE WERE IN CAHOOTS WITH THAT WHOLE OMMIE CROWD.



THOR IS THE POWER OF UNSELFISH LOVE. HE SAVED MY LIFE, AND I WORSHIP HIM.

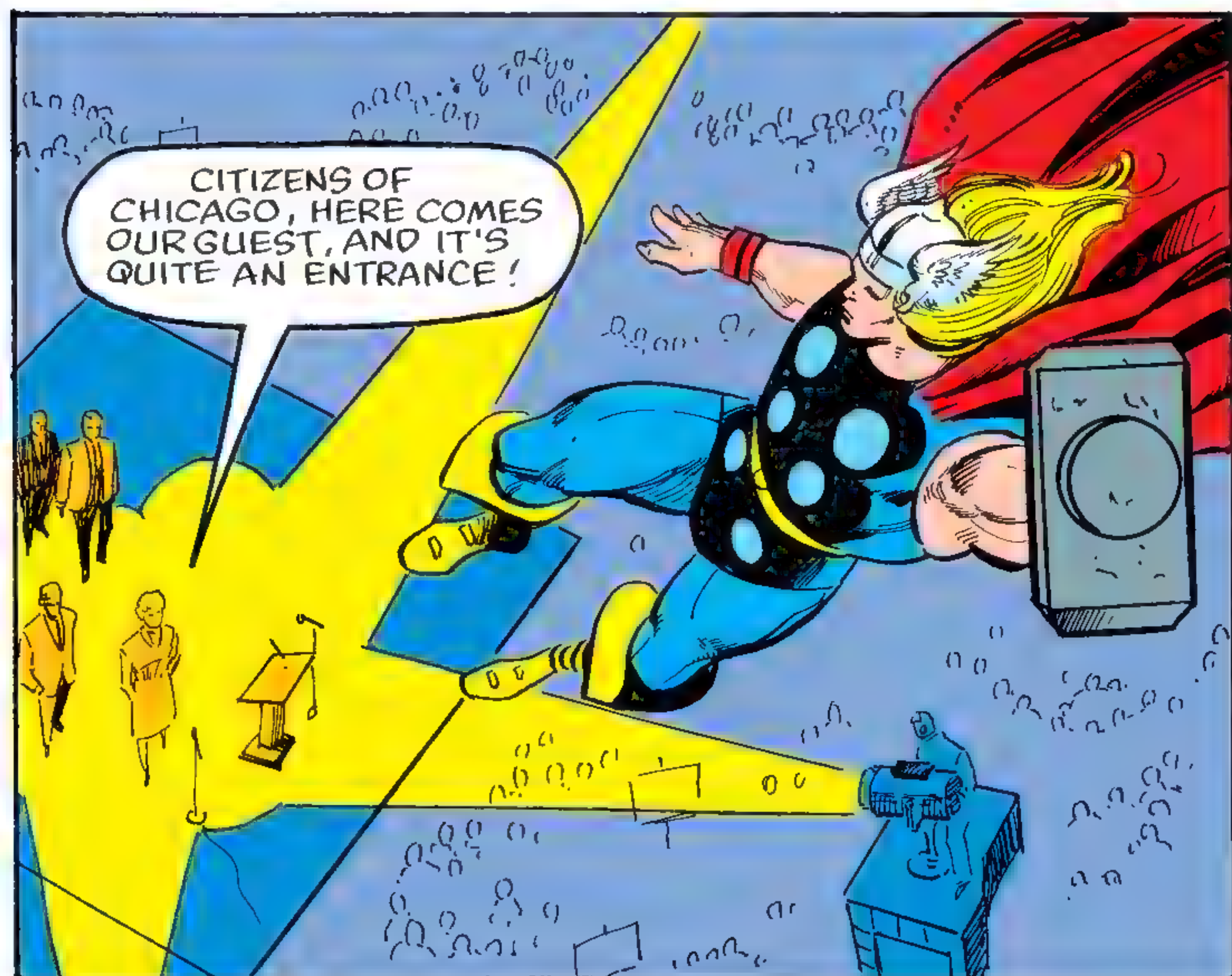


I LIKE THOR, I LIKE THE WAY HE SWINGS THAT HAMMER AND--



--HEY, LOOK! THERE HE IS!

CITIZENS OF CHICAGO, HERE COMES OUR GUEST, AND IT'S QUITE AN ENTRANCE!

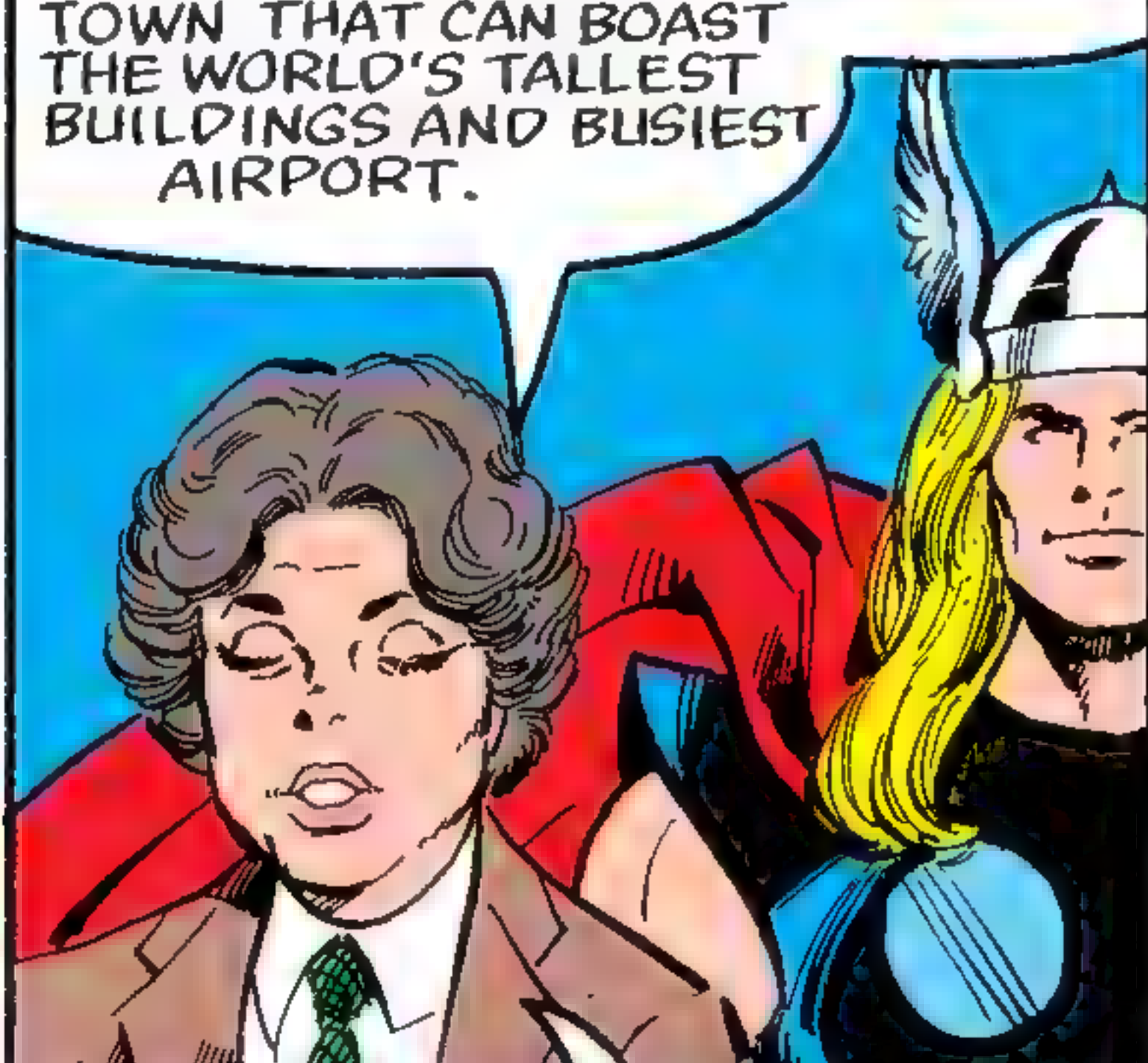


THOR, I AM PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

I AM HONORED TO BE HERE, MADAME MAYOR.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE CITY OF CHICAGO HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FRONT-RUNNER-- INNOVATIVE, ENERGETIC, AND INDIVIDUALISTIC; A HARD-WORKING, NO-NONSENSE TOWN THAT CAN BOAST THE WORLD'S TALLEST BUILDINGS AND BUSIEST AIRPORT.



IN FACT, OUR GUEST OF HONOR-- USED AS HE IS TO THE LOWER SKYLINE OF MANHATTAN-- WILL HAVE TO FLY HIGHER HERE IN THE WINDY CITY.

BUT IN ALL SERIOUSNESS... IT IS WITH THE GREATEST PRIDE THAT CHICAGO NOW CALLS HERSELF THE HOME OF THOR. AND I CONSIDER IT A SINGULAR DISTINCTION AND PRIVILEGE, AS YOUR MAYOR, TO PRESENT YOU, THOR, WITH THE KEY TO OUR AND YOUR CITY.



CLAP CLAPPLAUSE!

I THANK YOU, MAYOR BYRNE... AND I **SHALL** BE CAUTIOUS TO FLY **ABOVE** THE SPIRES OF GLASS AND STEEL, ESPECIALLY THE TOWER OF SEARS. NOW I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS SEVERAL WORDS TO THE PEOPLE OF CHICAGO--



BUT... BEFORE HE CAN EVEN CLEAR HIS THROAT...

BLASPHEMER AND INFIDEL!



THOR, IN WHOSE VILE NAME OUR LORD HAS BEEN THRUST ASIDE, KNOW THAT I AM SENT TO REDEEM HIS TRUE WAY!

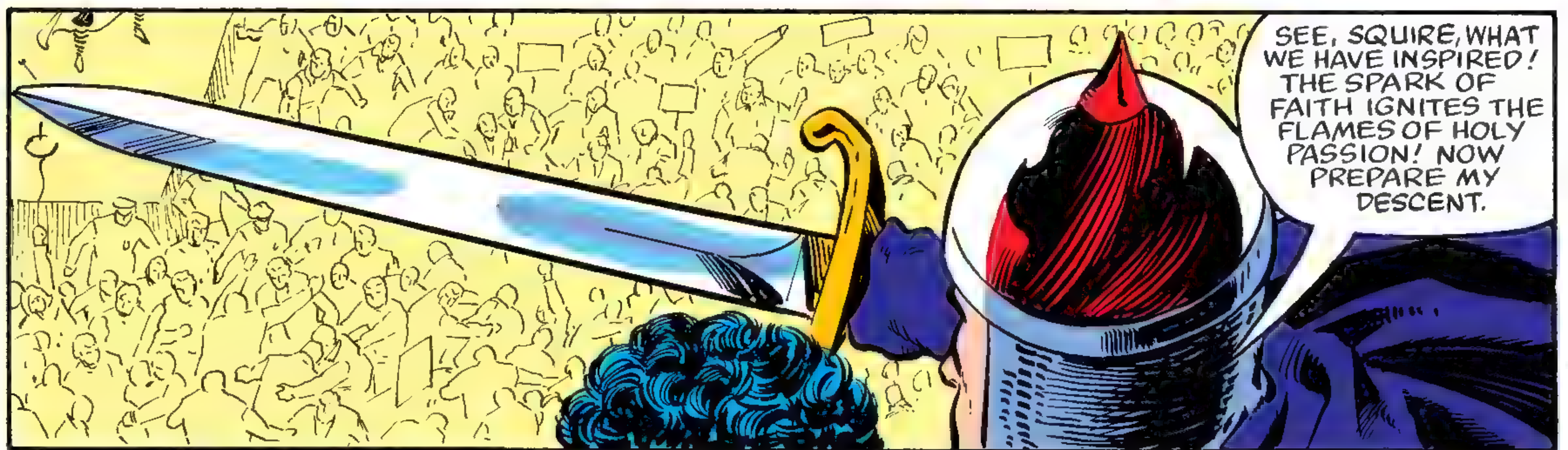
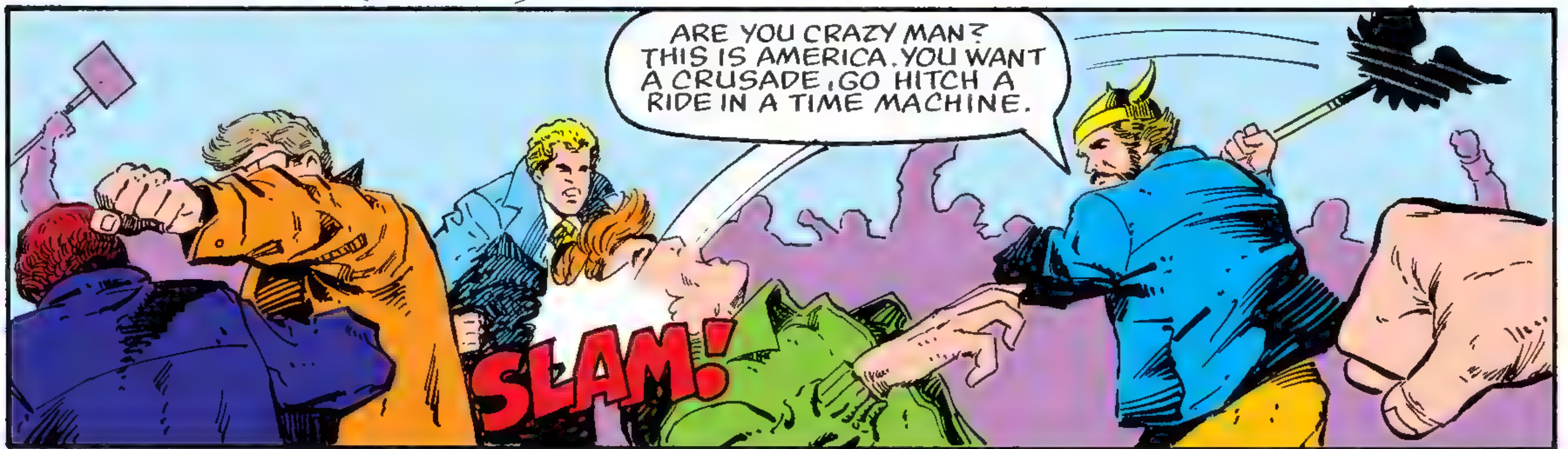
I RAISE MY SWORD OF FAITH AGAINST YOUR PAGAN HAMMER OF IMMORALITY.

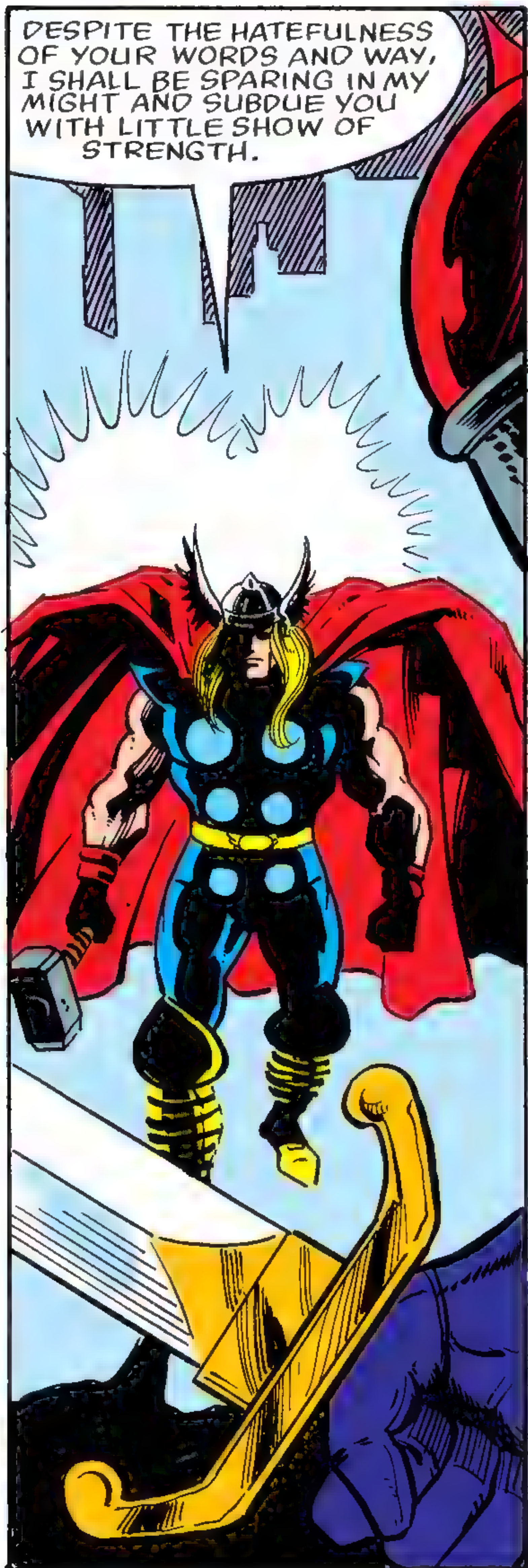
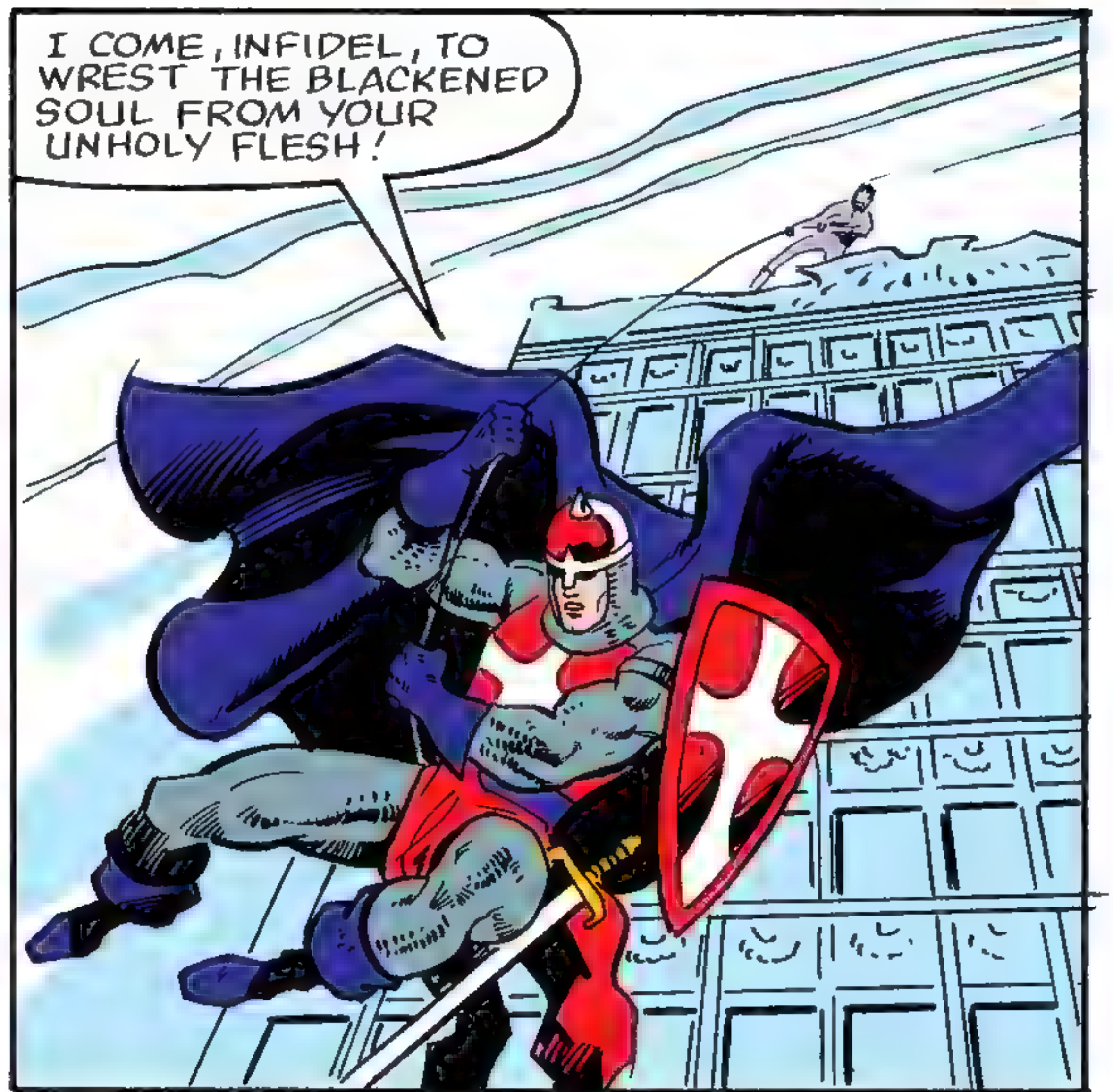
THOR! GULP! I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE I SHOULD'A STAYED WITH MY FEET IN THE GRAVES.

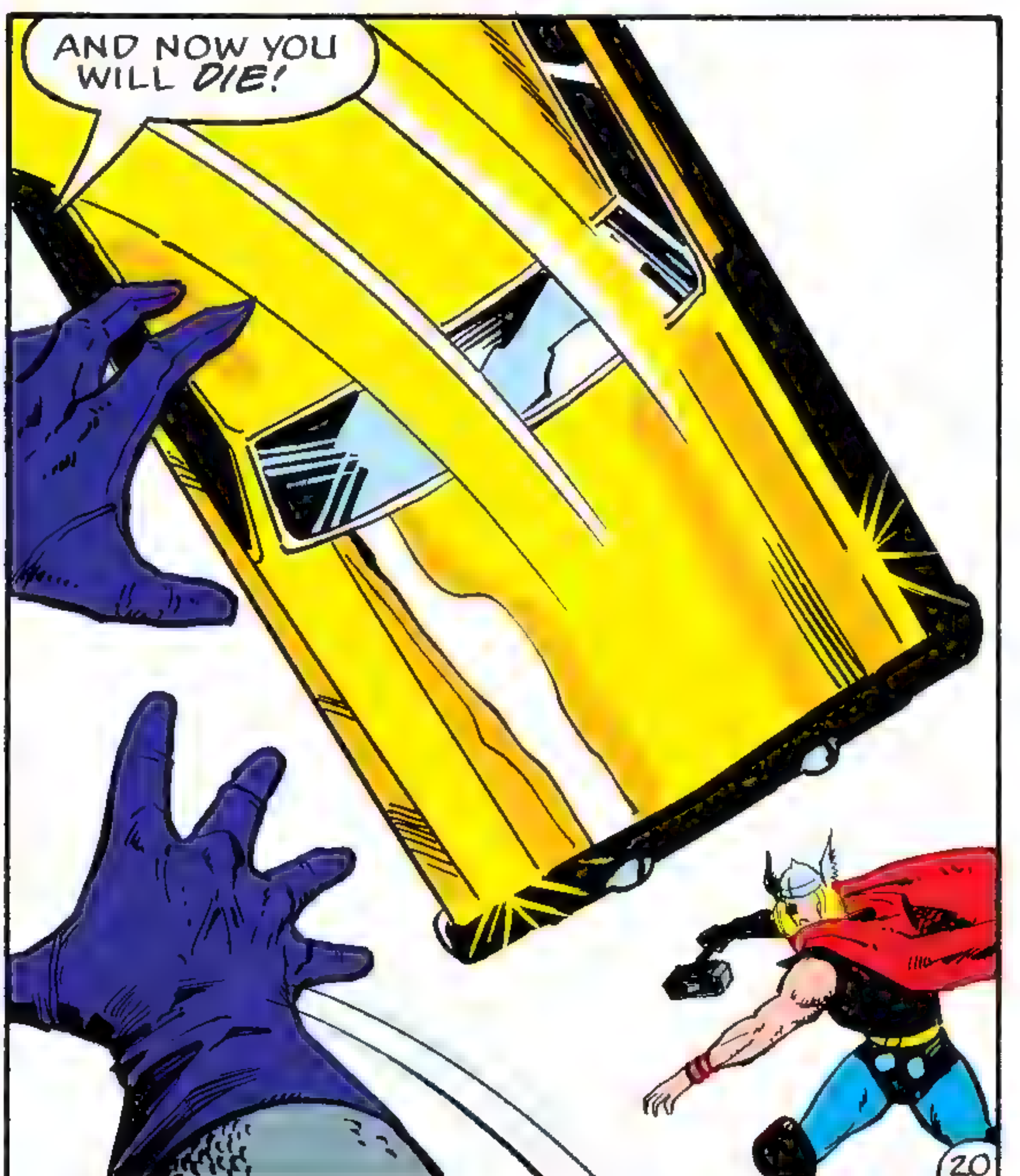
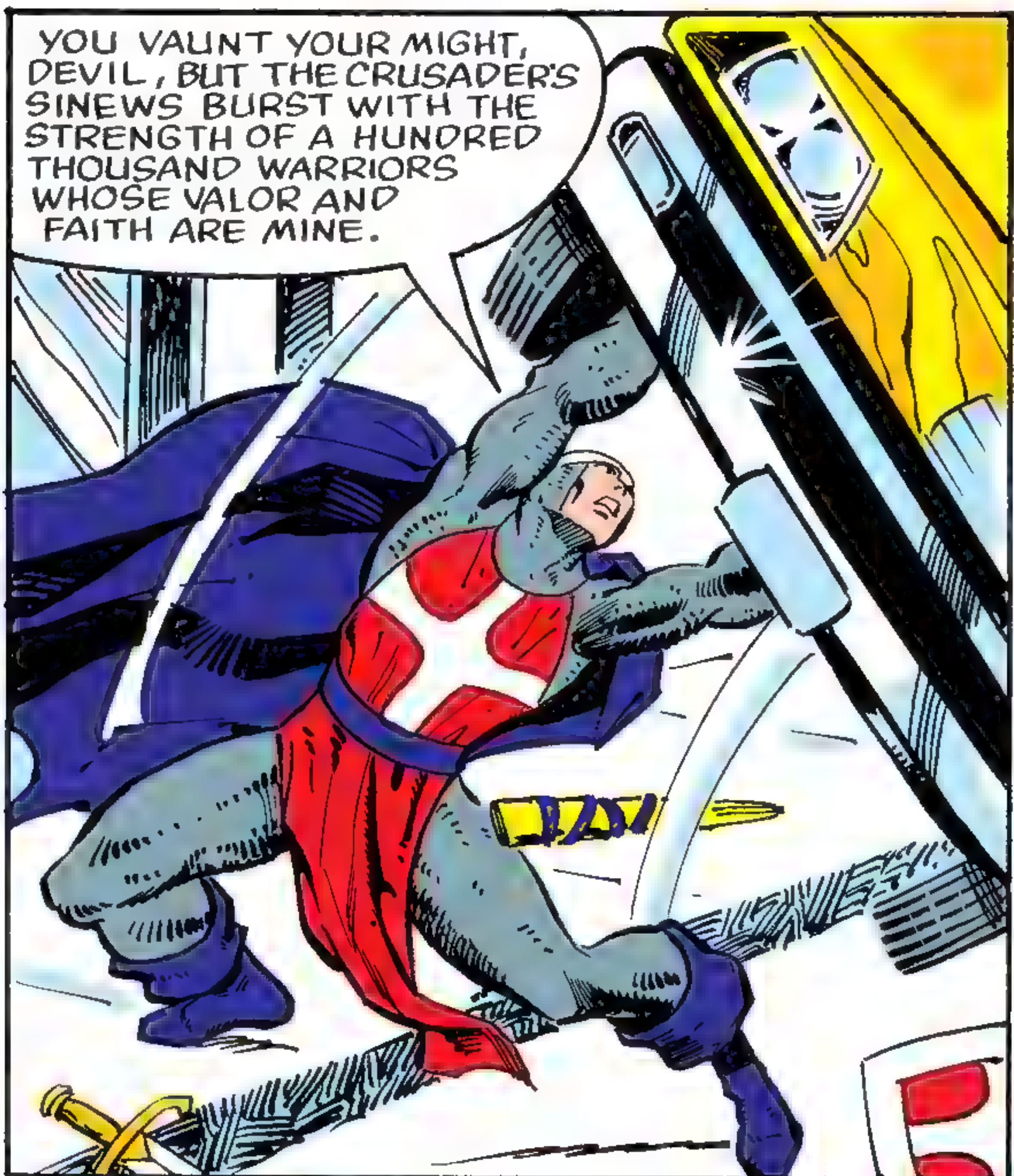
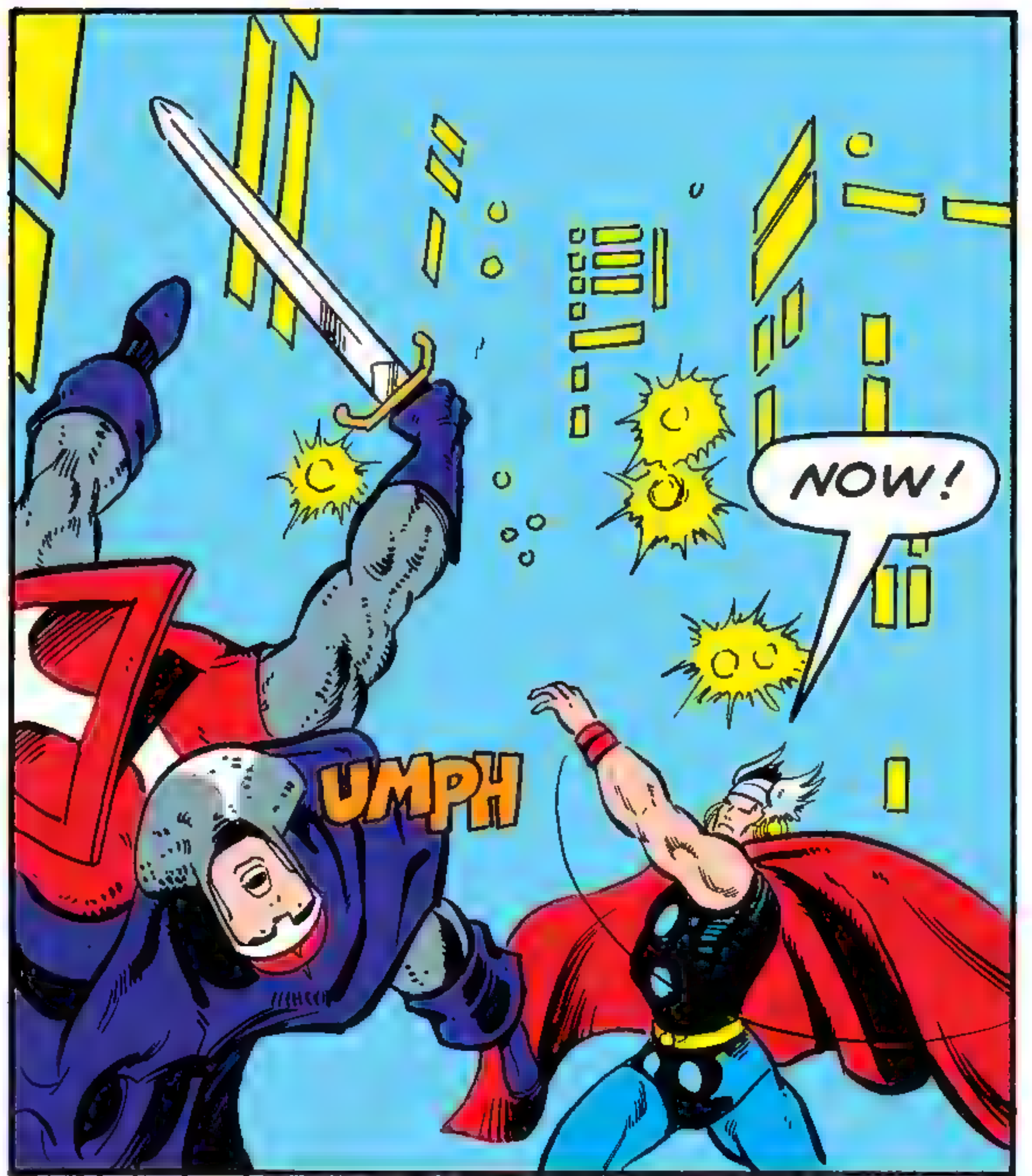
SO SPEAKS... THE CRUSADER!





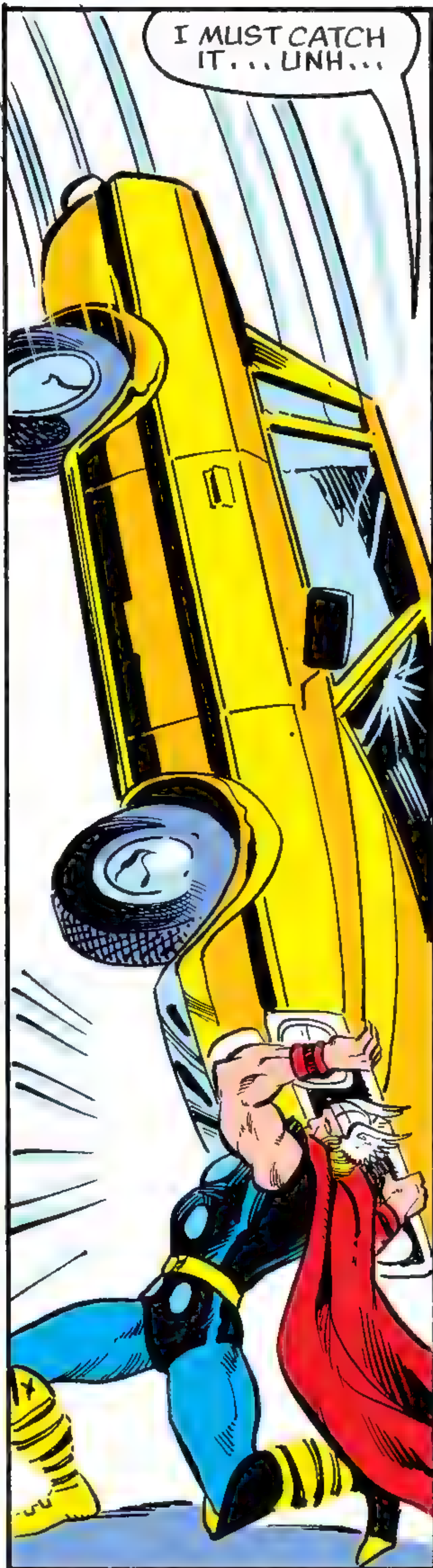








THOSE MORTALS
WILL BE CRUSHED!

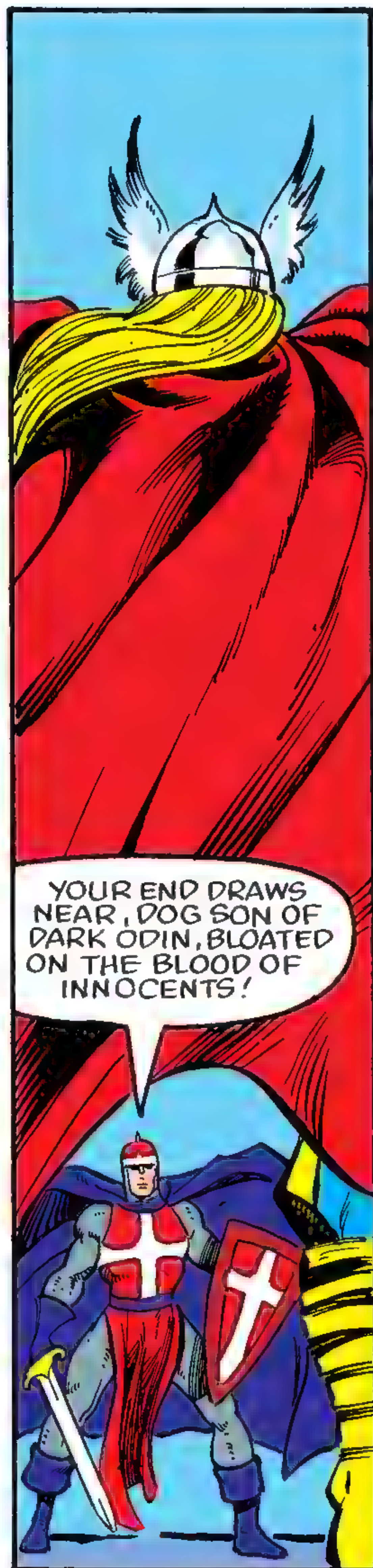


I MUST CATCH
IT... UNH...

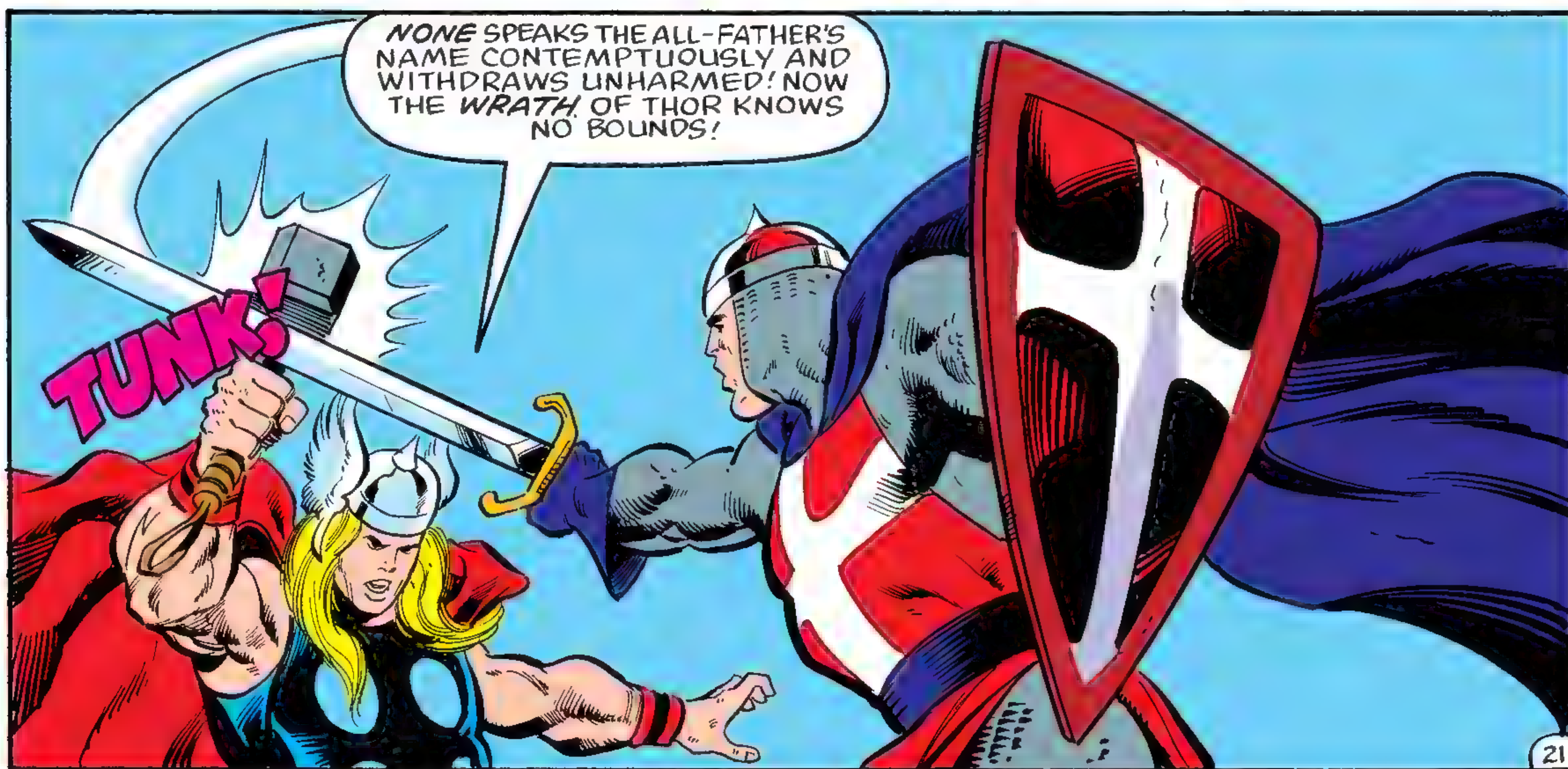


WHOOEE! POLOWSKI
SAYS, I BETTER START
PLAYIN' LOYALSQUIRE!
WHO WOULDAGUESSED
MY CRAZY NEW BOSS
WAS AS STRONG AS A
SUPER HERO!?

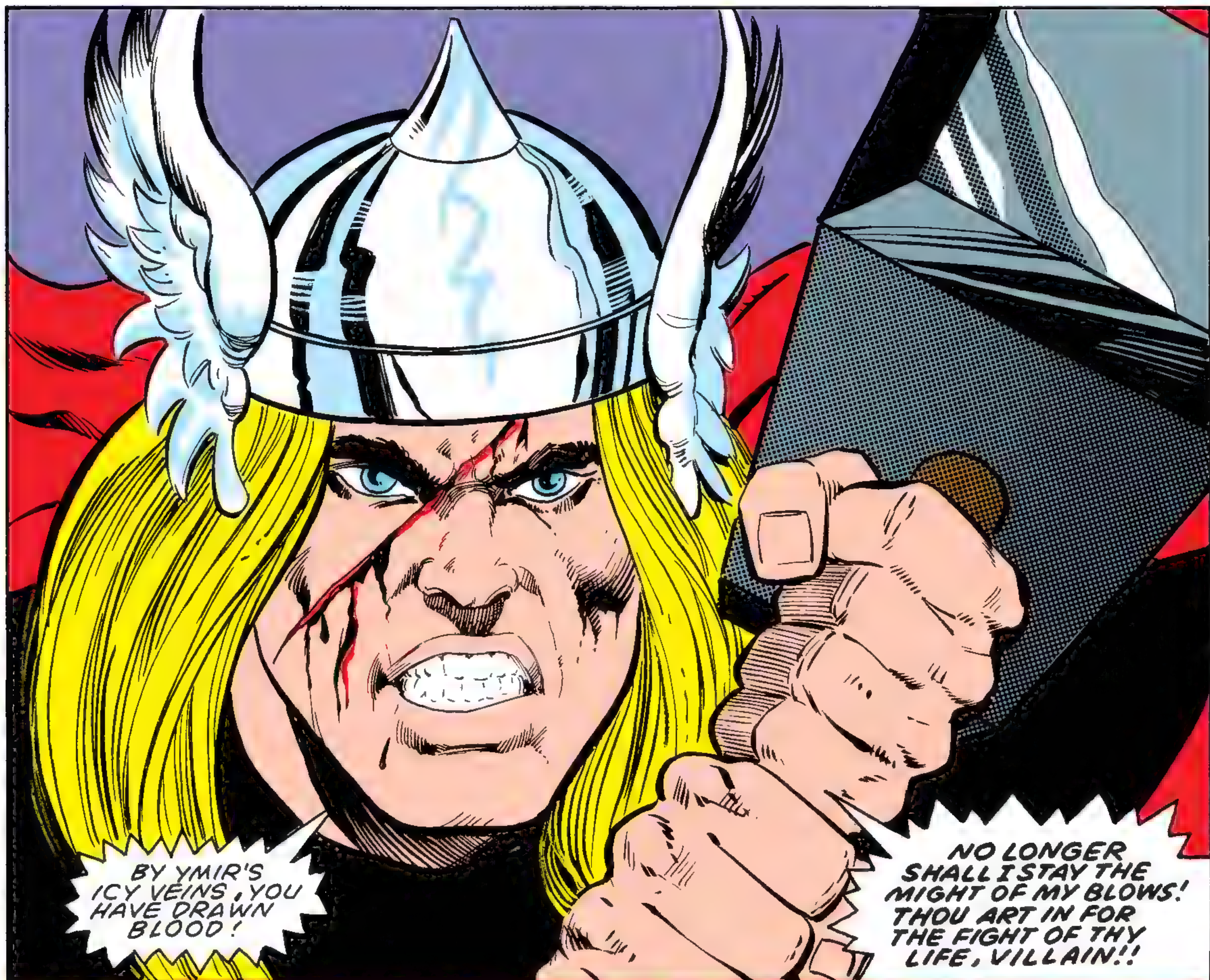
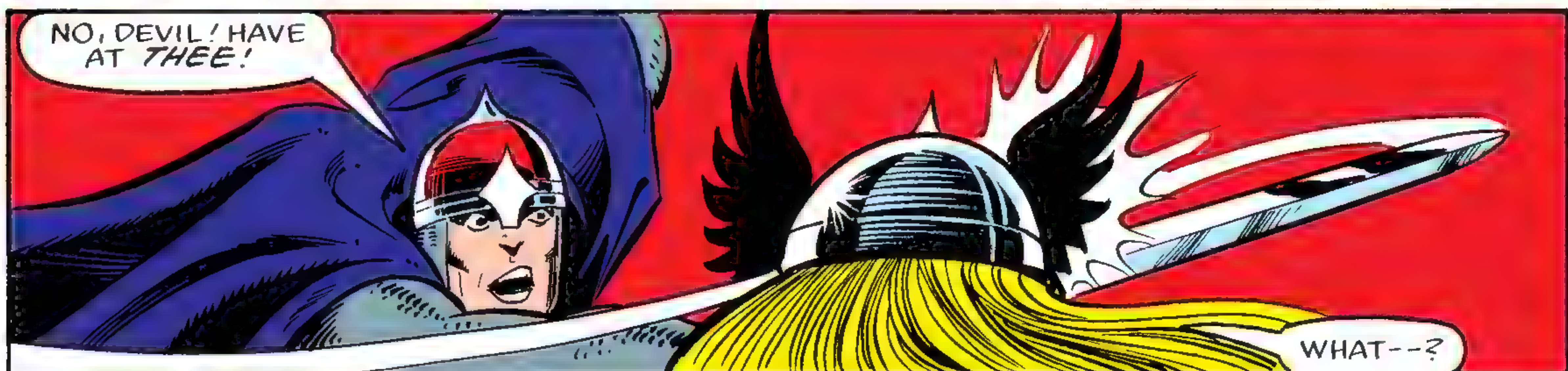
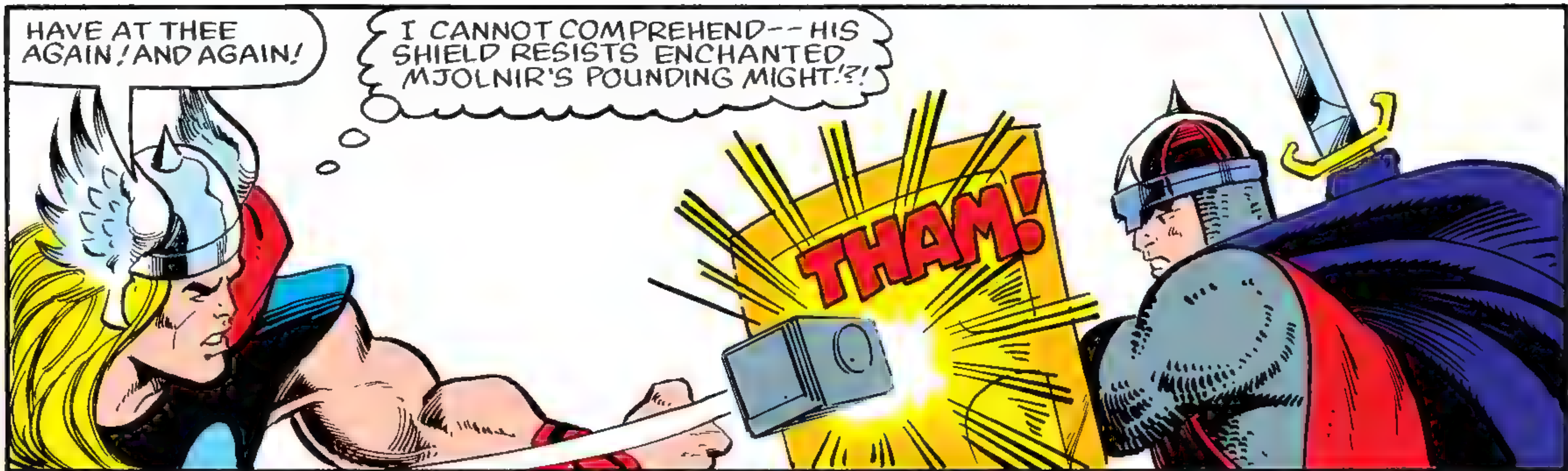
... AND LOWER
IT UPON ITS
END THAT IT
NOT SHATTER!



YOUR END DRAWS
NEAR, DOG SON OF
DARK ODIN, BLOATED
ON THE BLOOD OF
INNOCENTS!



NONE SPEAKS THE ALL-FATHER'S
NAME CONTEMPTUOUSLY AND
WITHDRAWS UNHARMED! NOW
THE WRATH OF THOR KNOWS
NO BOUNDS!



NEXT: HOLY WAR!

60¢

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MAY

02450

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THE
MIGHTY

THOR



THE THUNDER GOD ON...
**THE THRESHOLD
OF DEATH!**

HALL/SINNOTT

When DR. DONALD BLAKE strikes his wooden walking-stick upon the ground, it becomes the mystic hammer MJOLNIR—and the lame physician is transformed into the Norse God of Thunder, Master of the Storm, Lord of the Living Lightning—and heir to the throne of eternal Asgard...

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**



ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPTER

BOB HALL
PENCILER/PLOTTER

VINCE COLLETTA
INKER

JANICE CHIANG
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MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

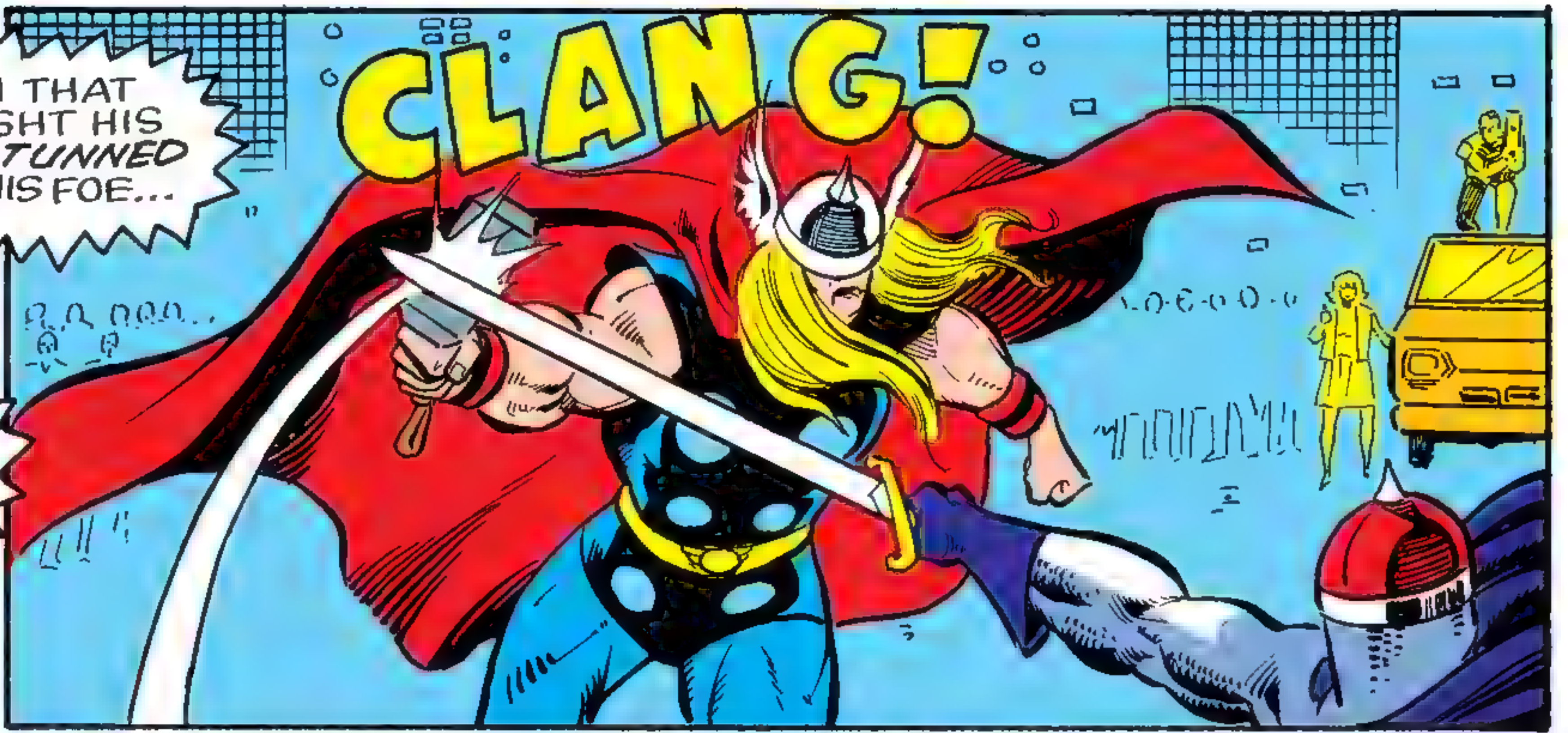
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF



THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT THOR IS GIVING THIS FIGHT HIS ALL -- BUT HE SEEMS *STUNNED* BY THE STRENGTH OF HIS FOE...

... AND I MIGHT ADD, TED, THAT THIS MYSTERIOUS CRUSADER, WHOEVER HE IS, IS *AWESOMELY* STRONG--

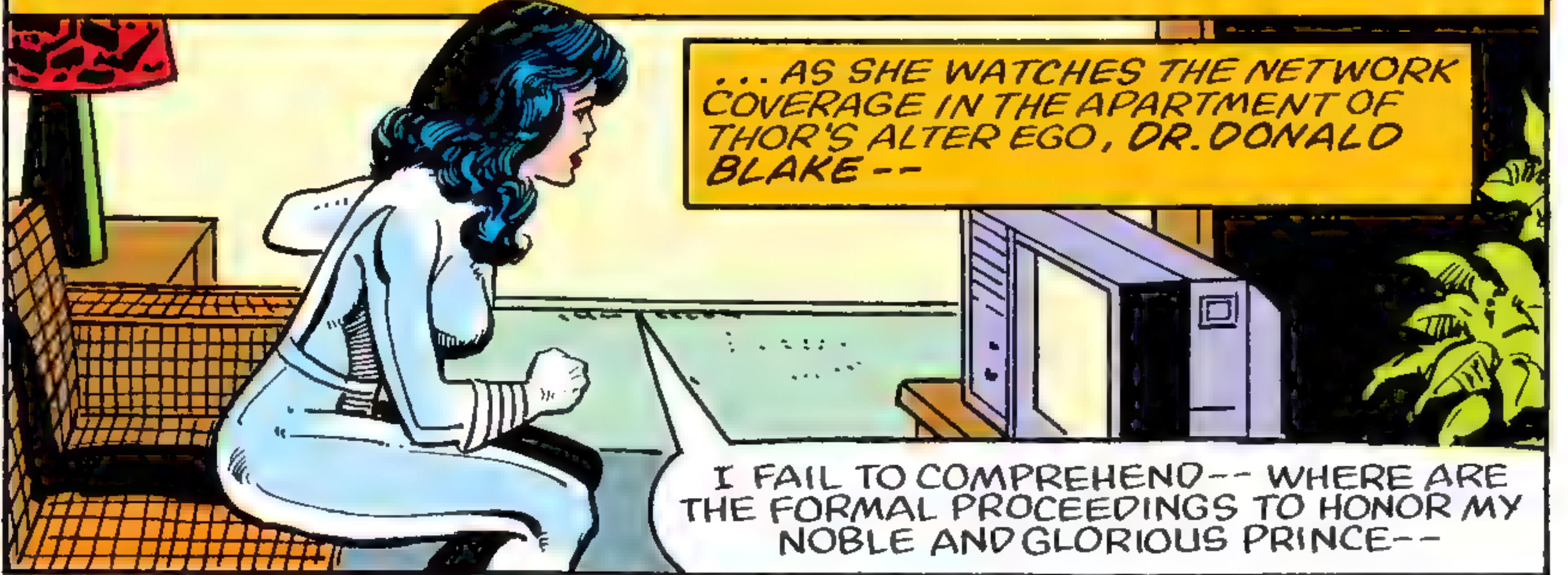
-- WE'VE ALREADY SEEN HIM HURL AN *AUTOMOBILE* THROUGH THE AIR... OH... OKAY...



... HERE WE HAVE A CLOSE UP OF THE CRUSADER FOR THE VIEWERS AT HOME...



AND AMONG THOSE VIEWERS, THE GODDESS SIF, THOR'S BETROTHED, WHO IS JUST THIS VERY MINUTE LEARNING OF HER BELOVED'S PLIGHT...



... AS SHE WATCHES THE NETWORK COVERAGE IN THE APARTMENT OF THOR'S ALTER EGO, DR. DONALD BLAKE --

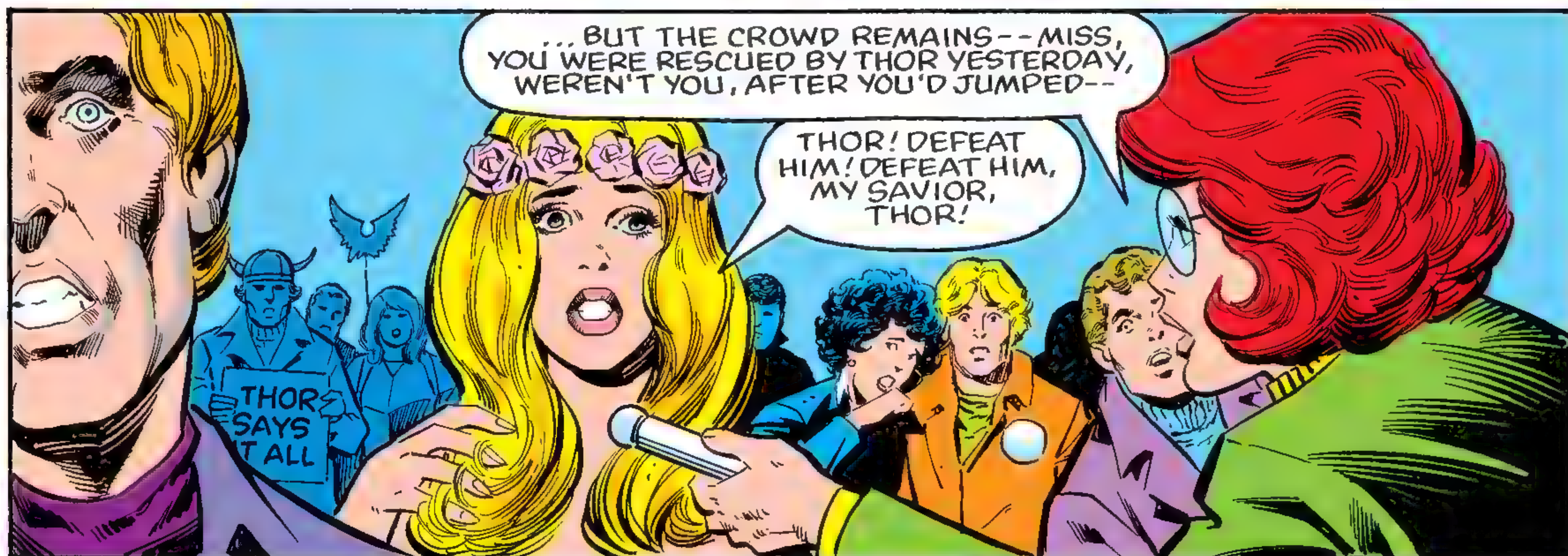
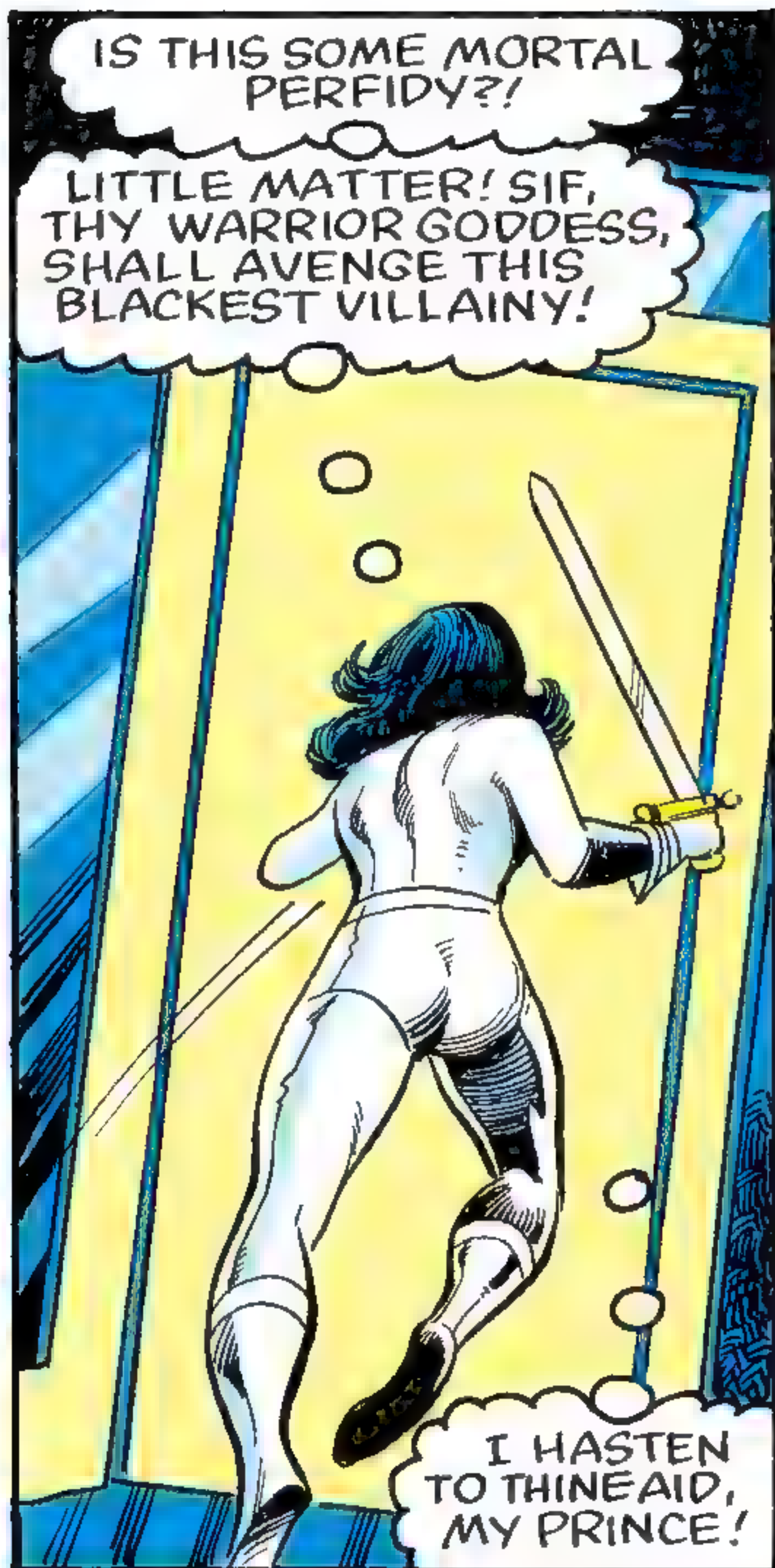
I FAIL TO COMPREHEND -- WHERE ARE THE FORMAL PROCEEDINGS TO HONOR MY NOBLE AND GLORIOUS PRINCE --

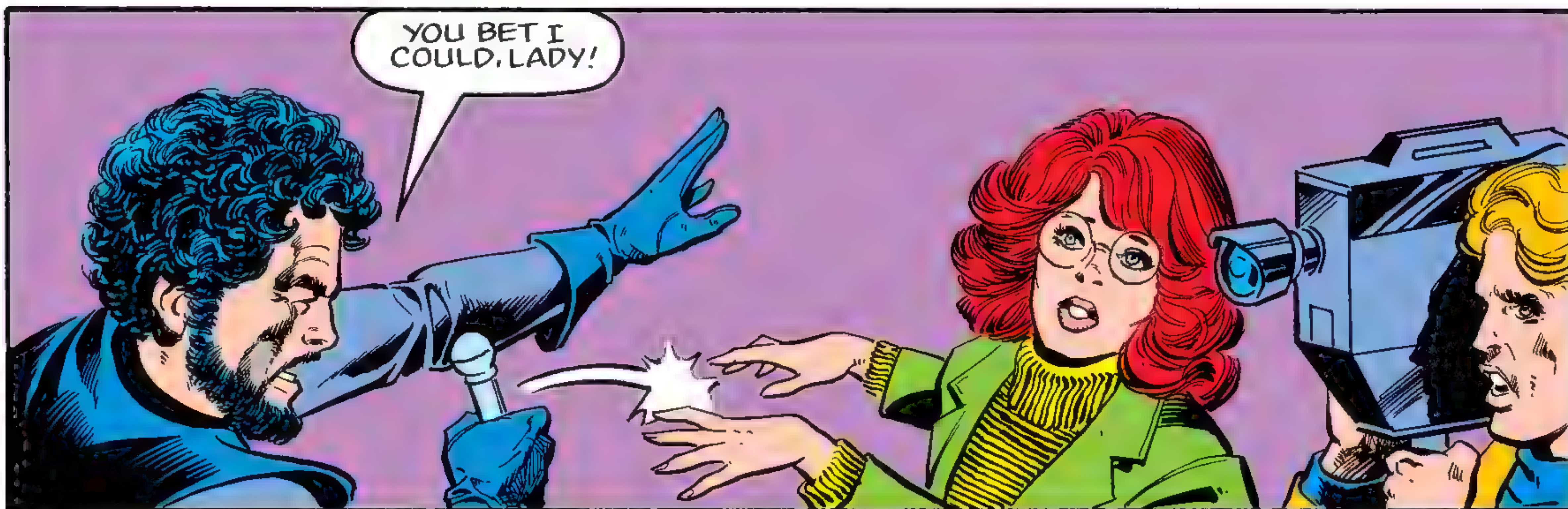


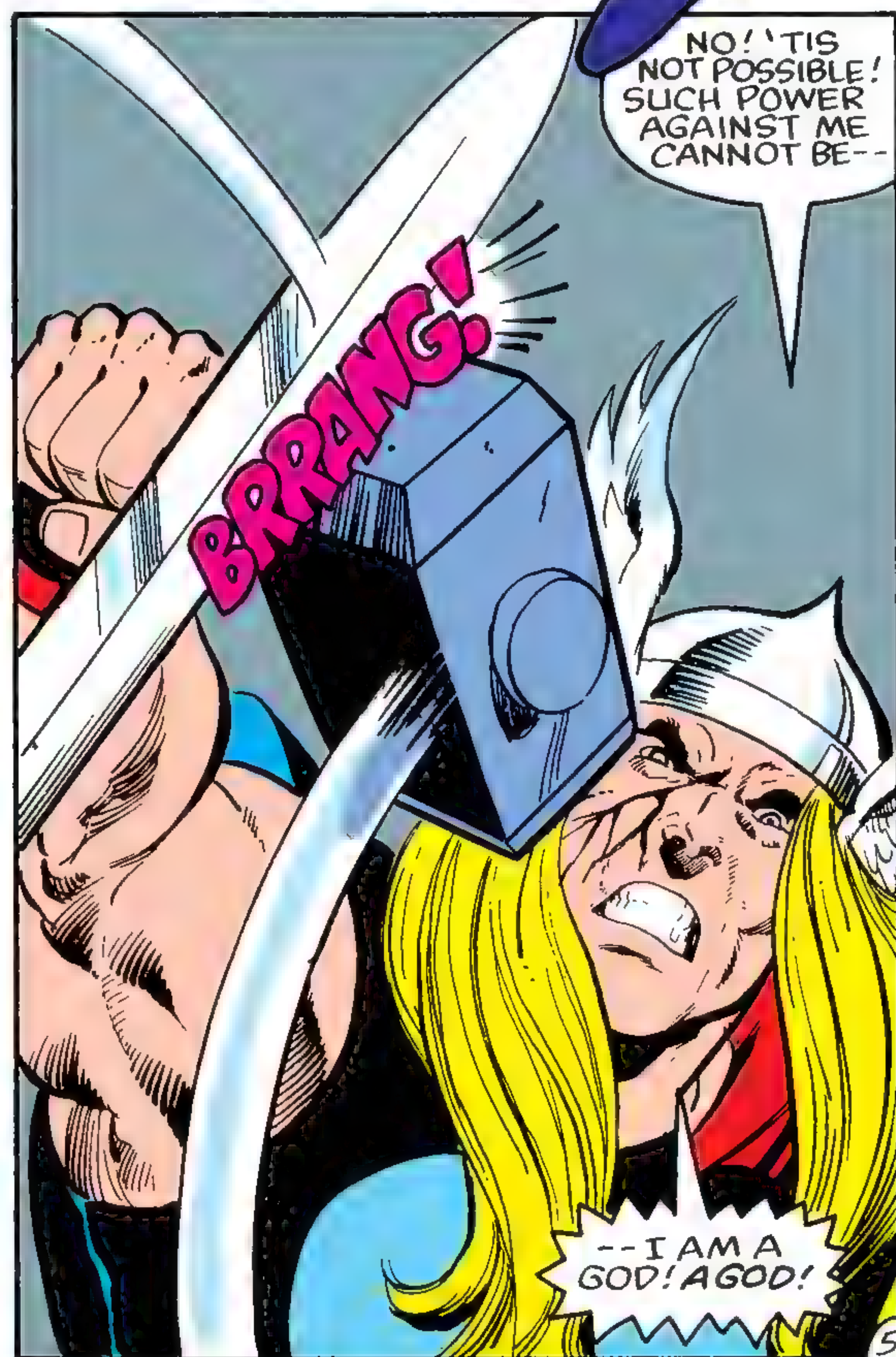
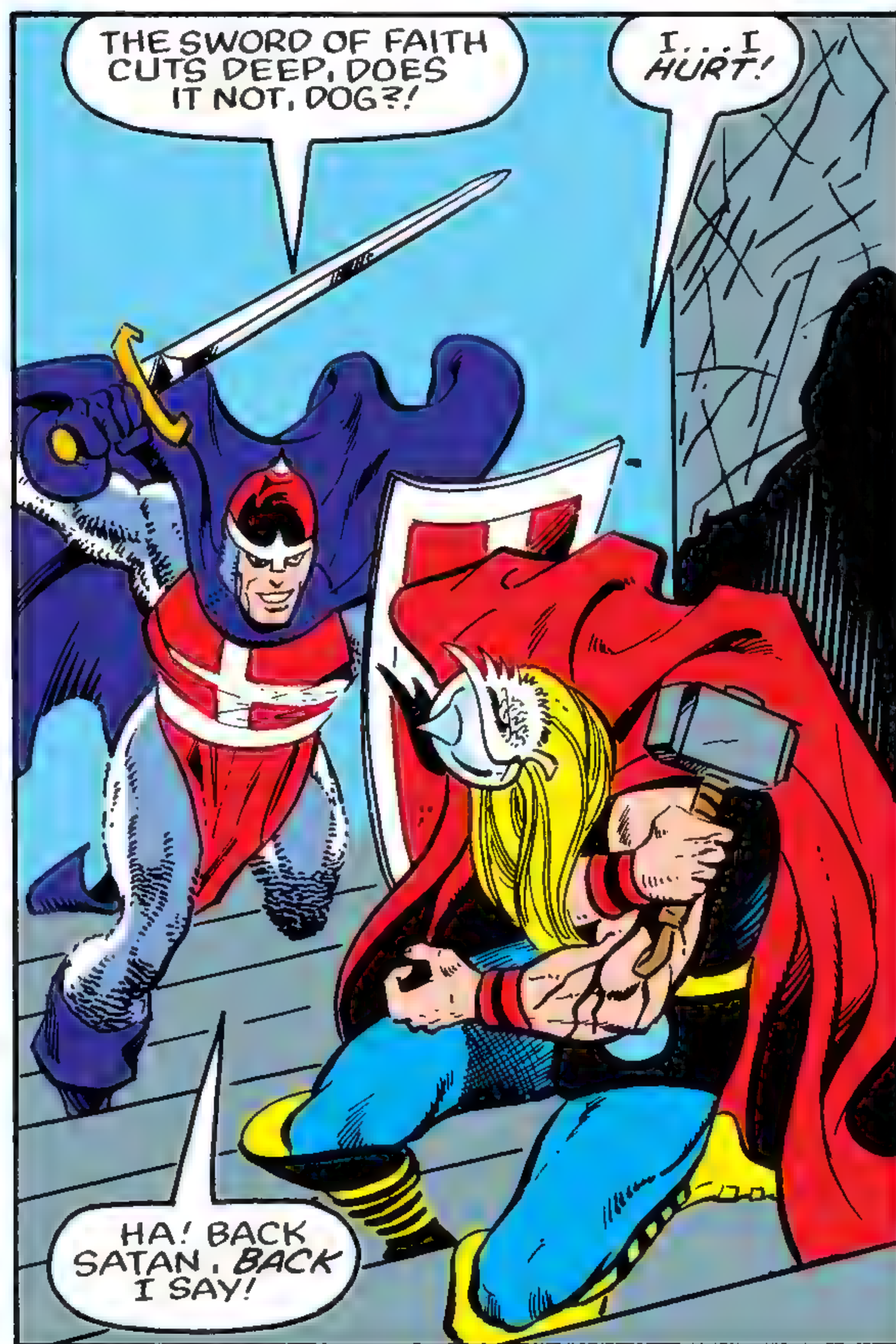
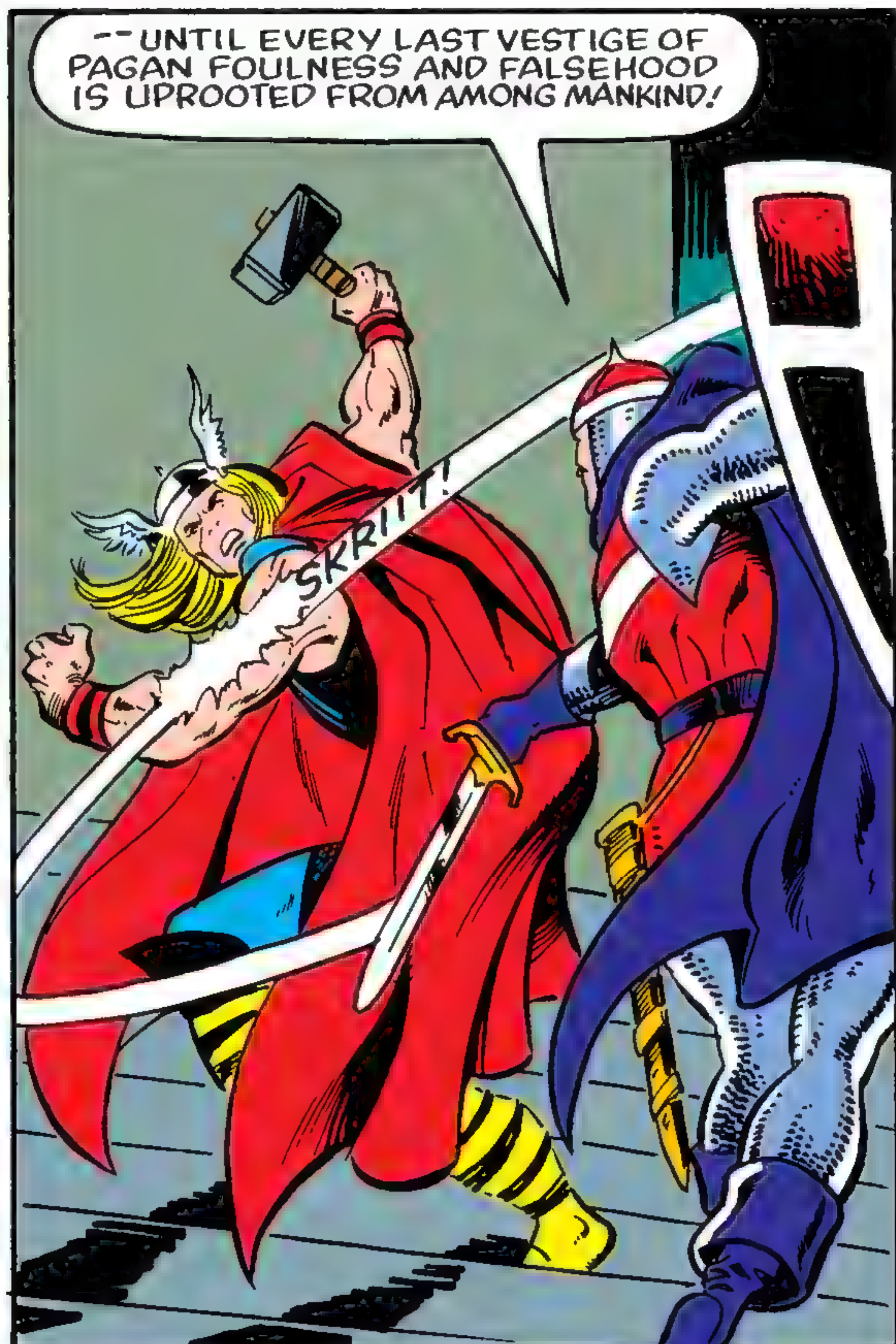
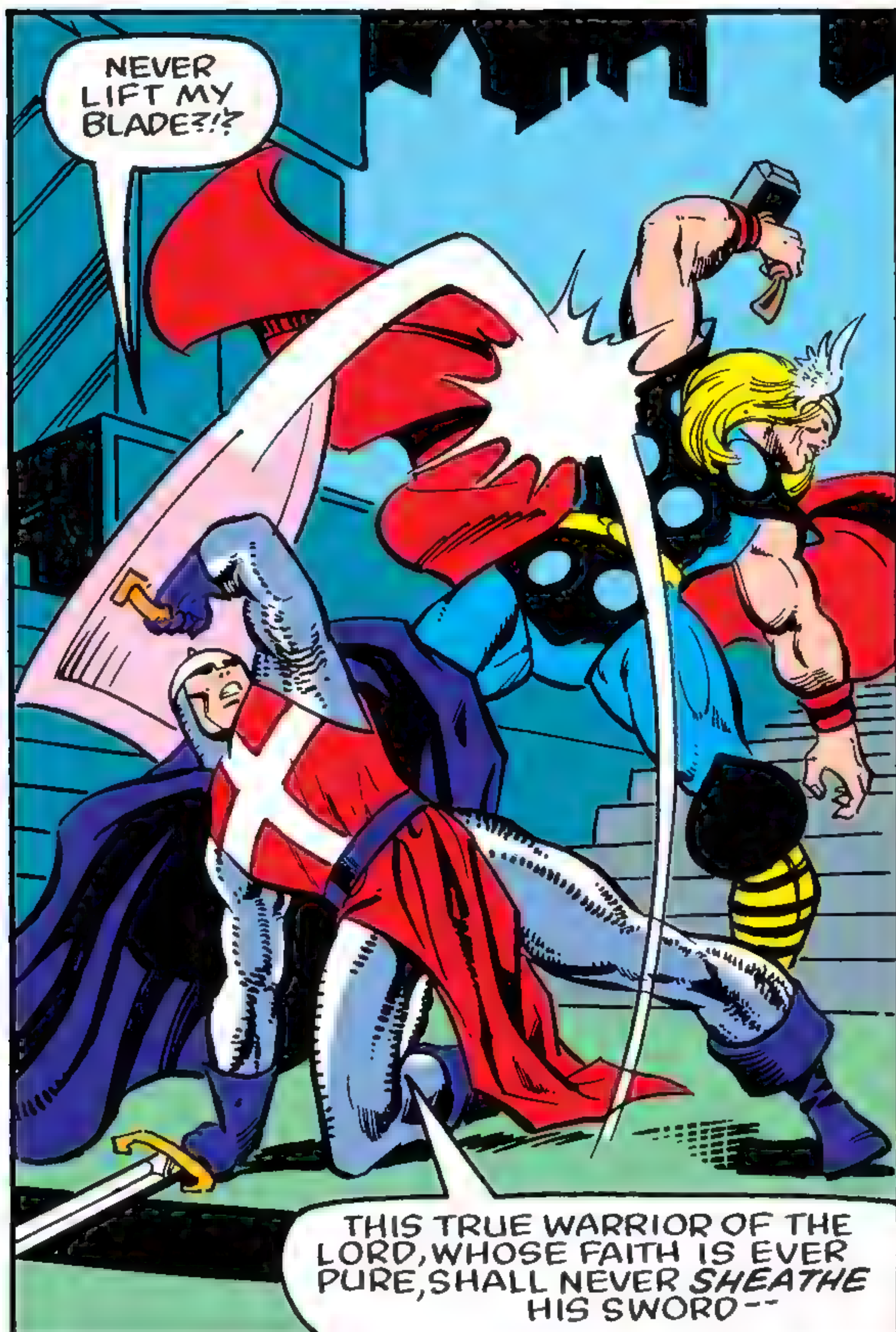
... AS YOU CAN SEE, THOR IS HURT, HE'S *BLEEDING*!

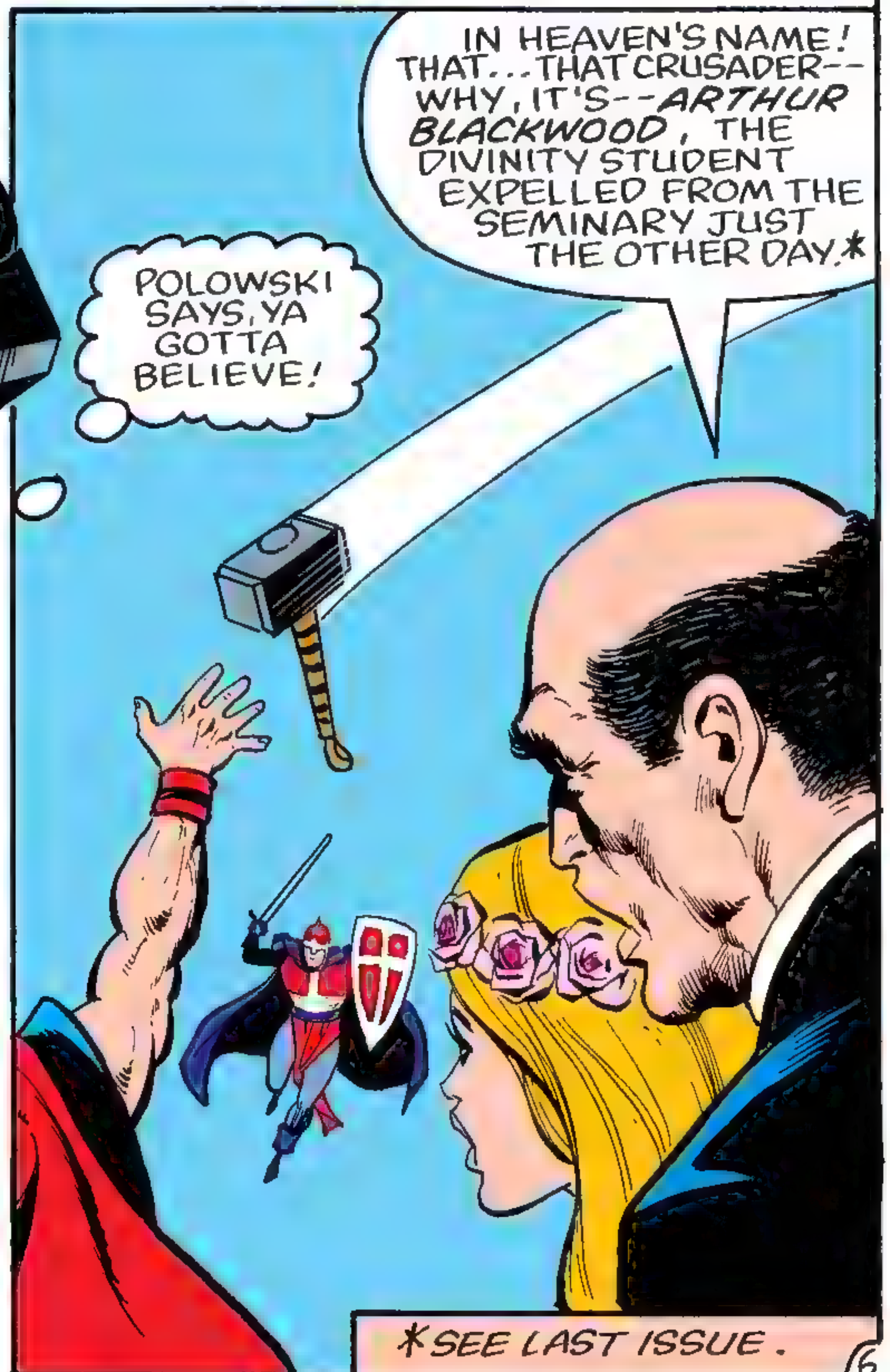
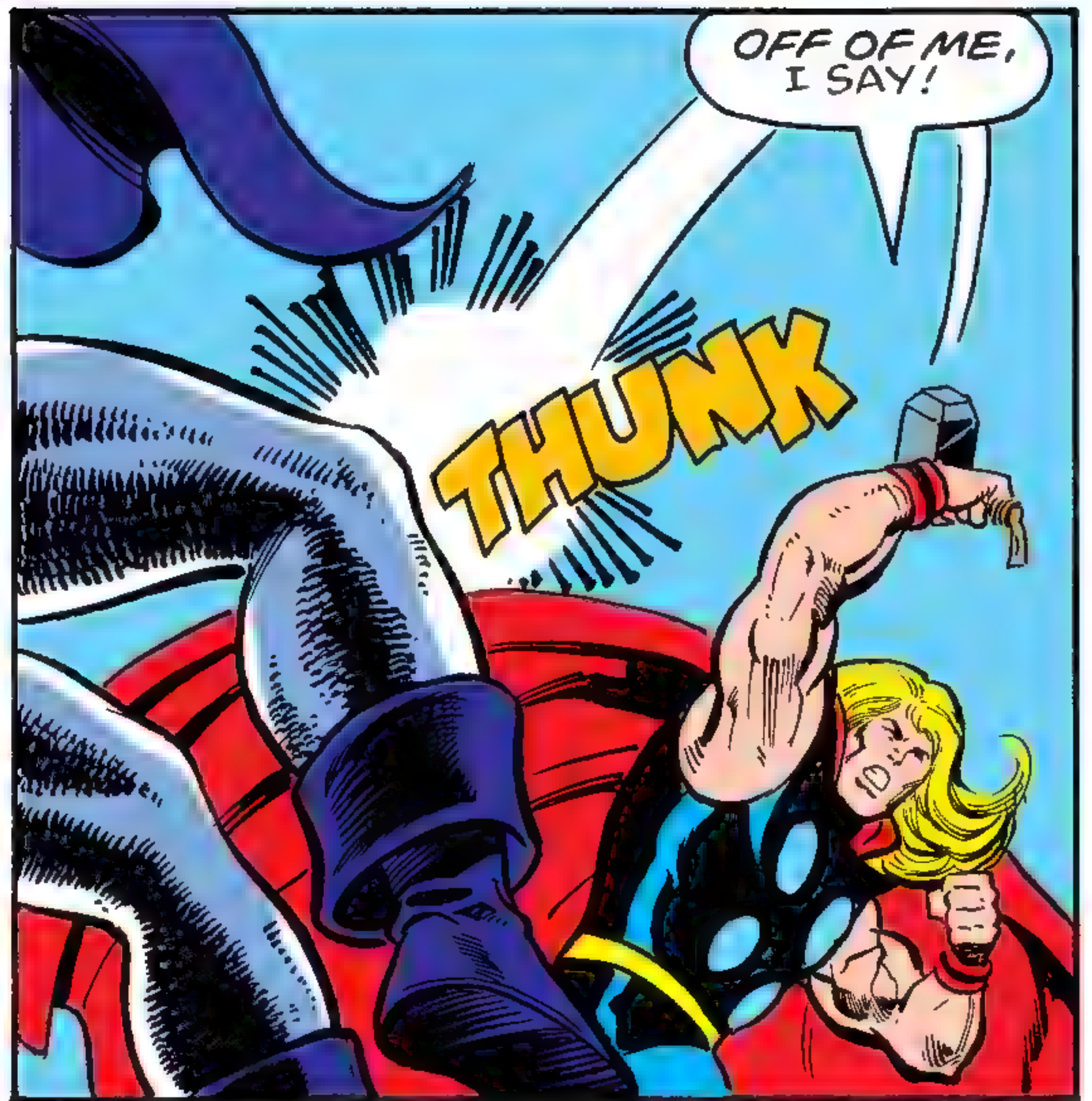


MY LOVE, WHAT BASE INIQUITY HAS BEFALLEN THEE?!

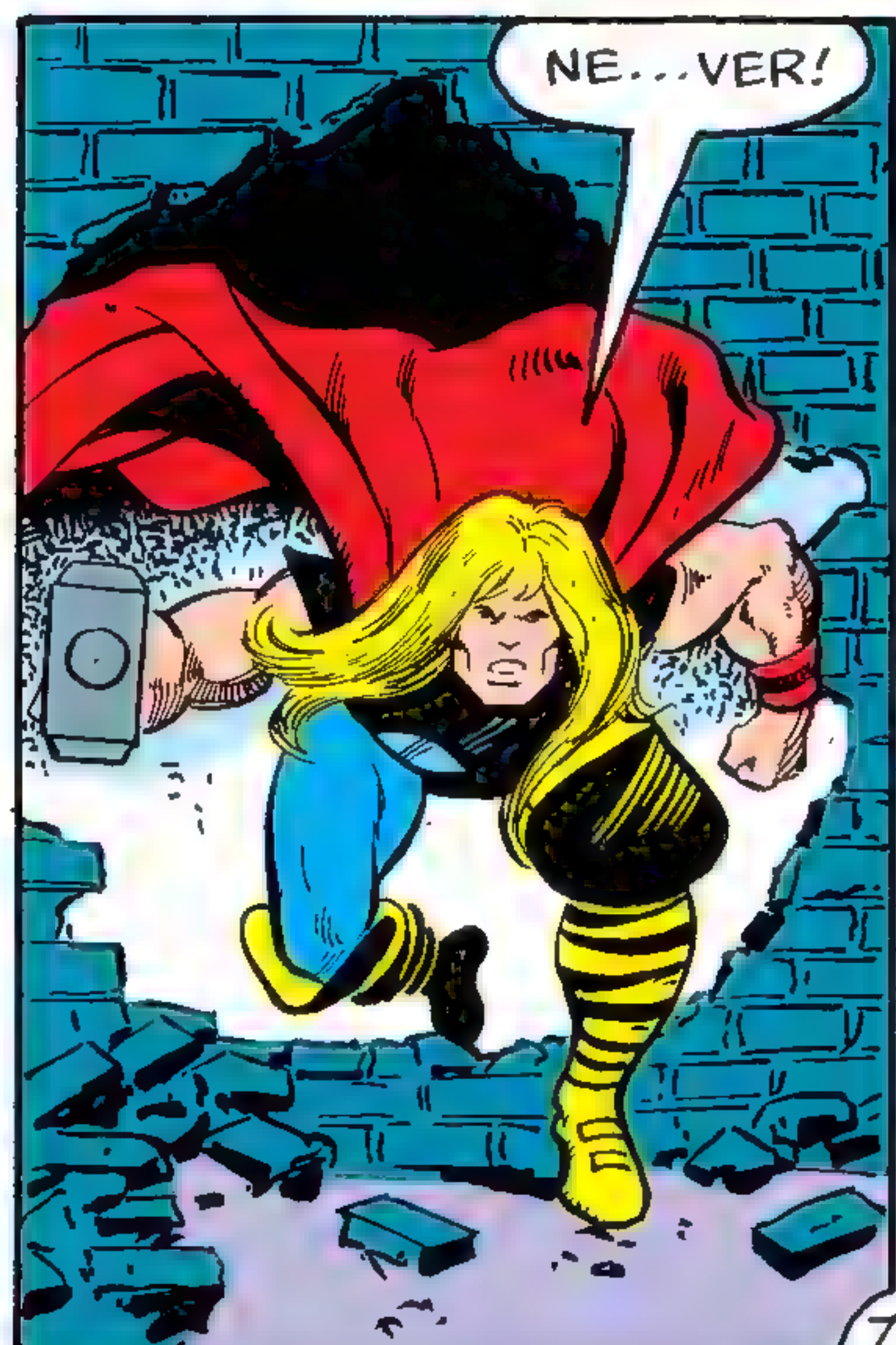
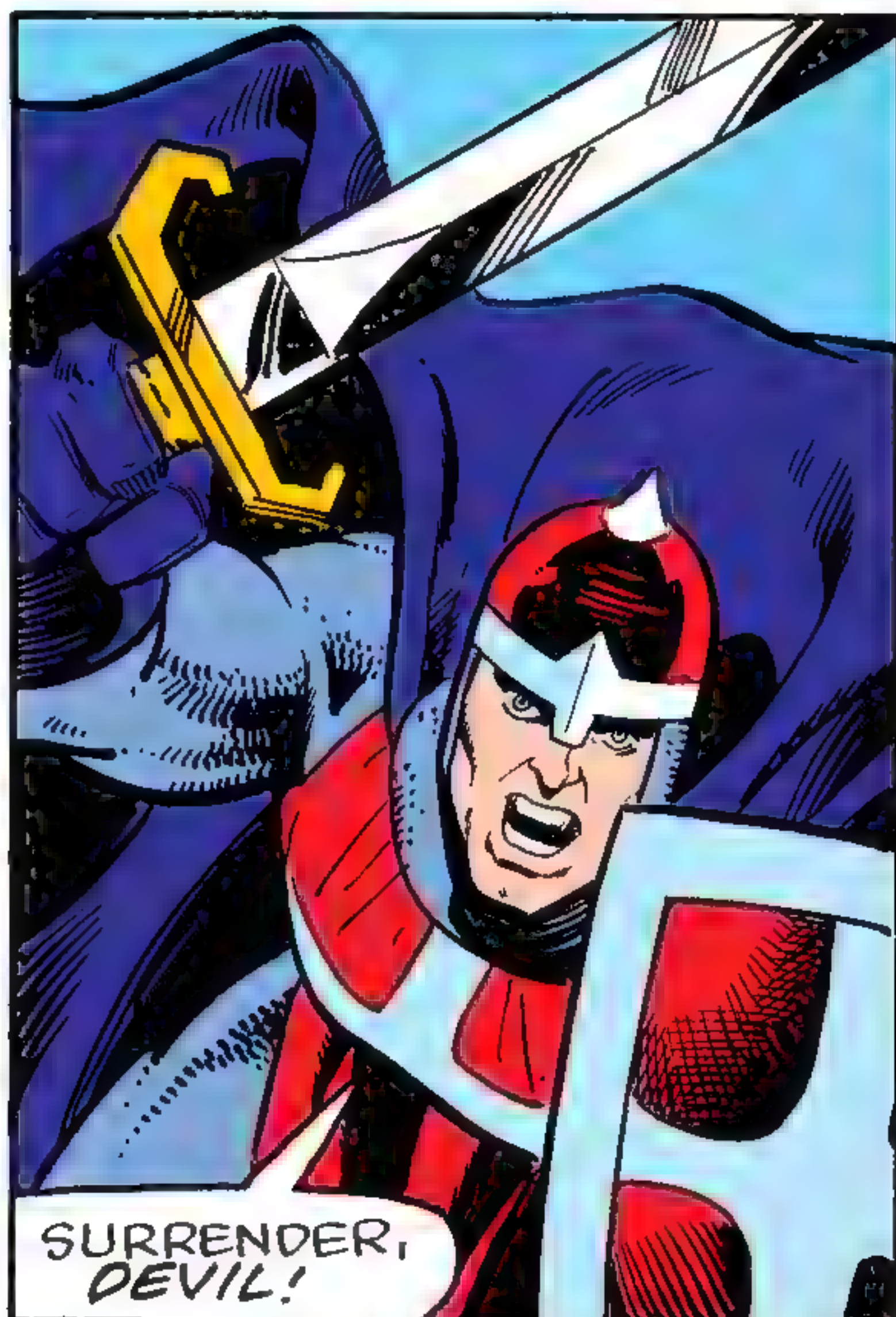
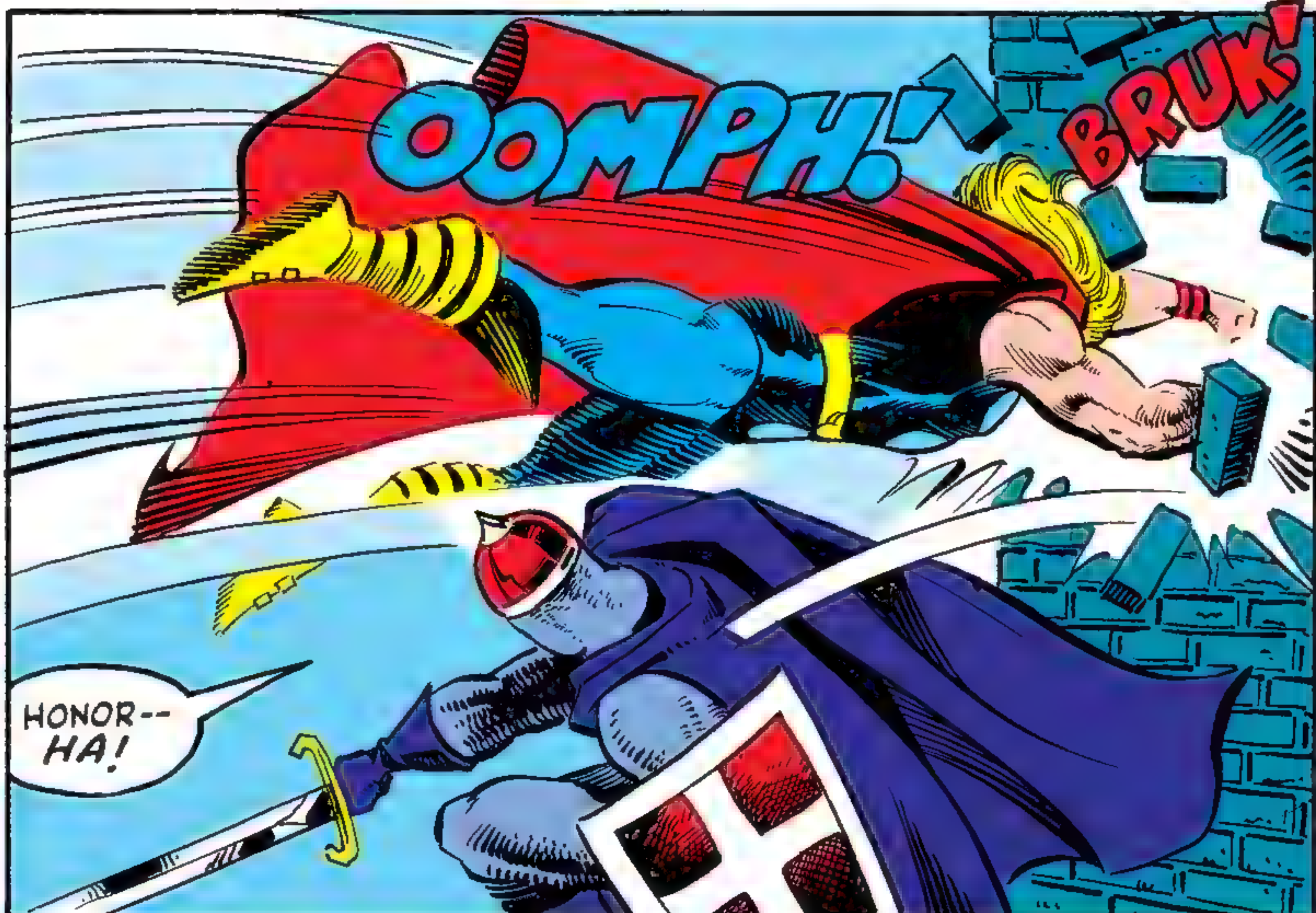
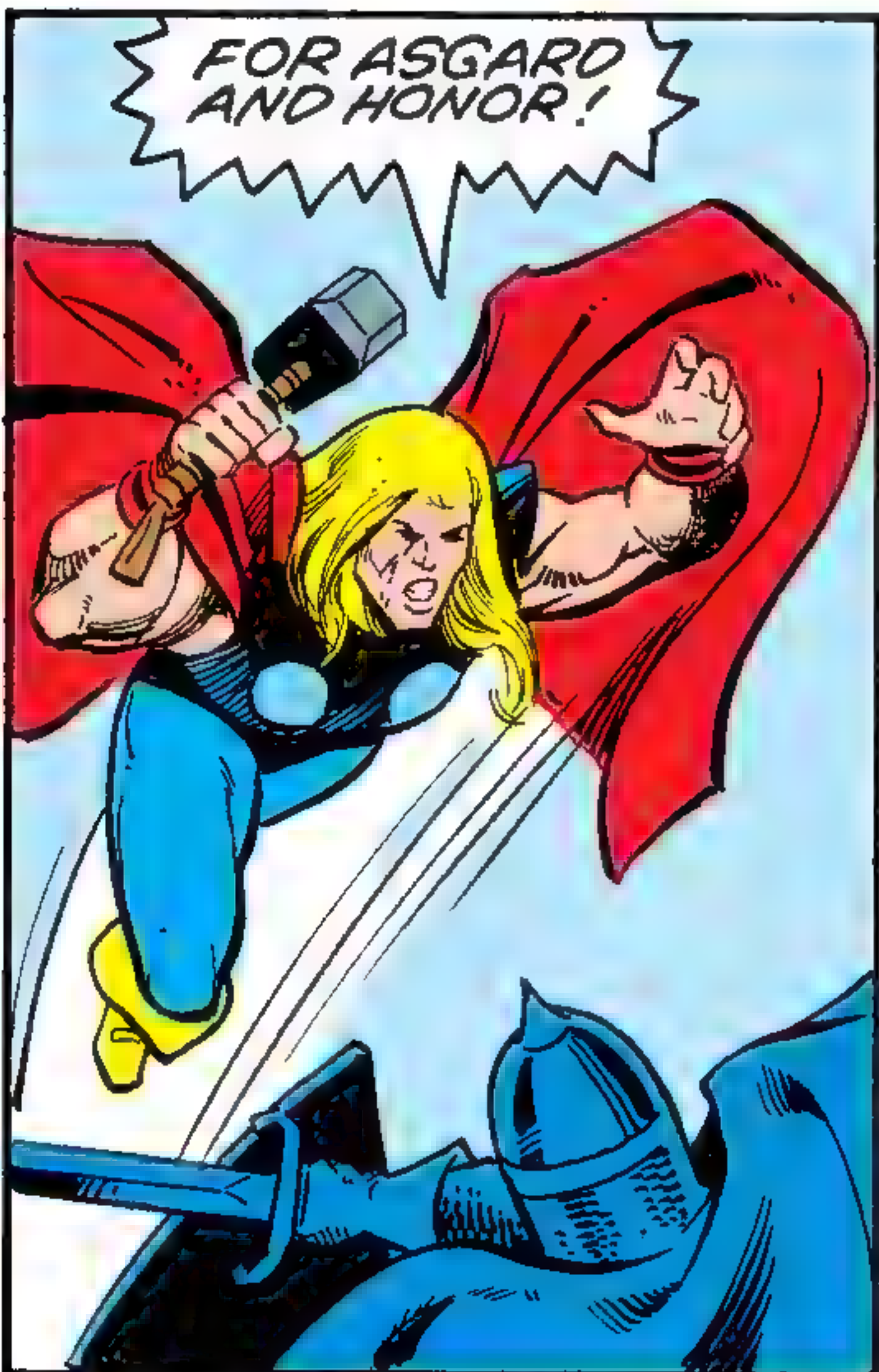
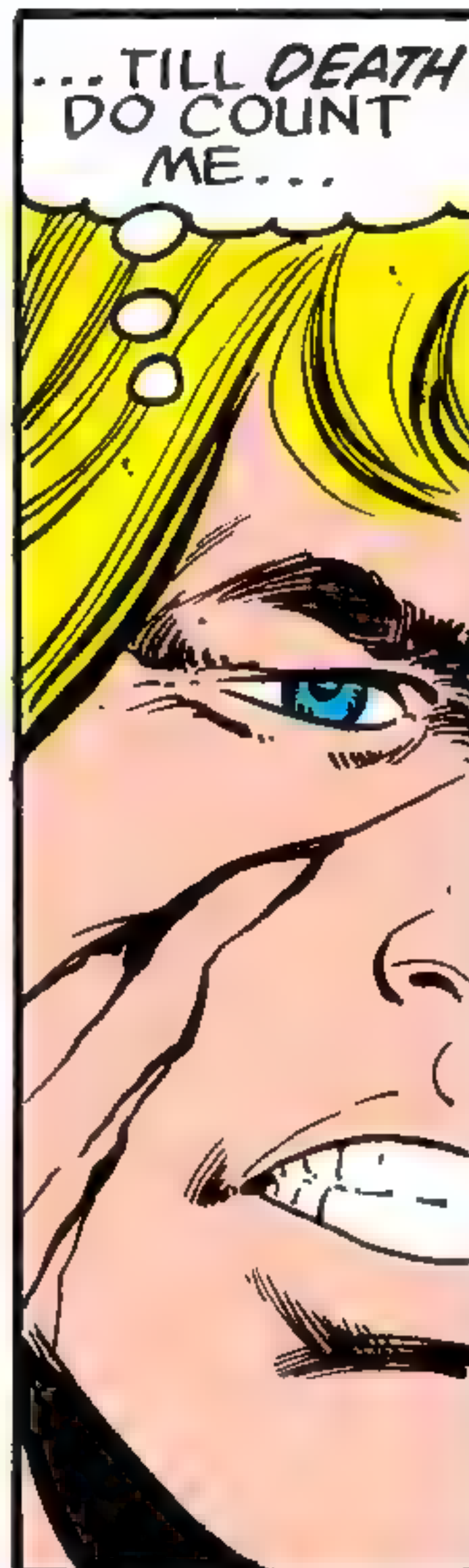


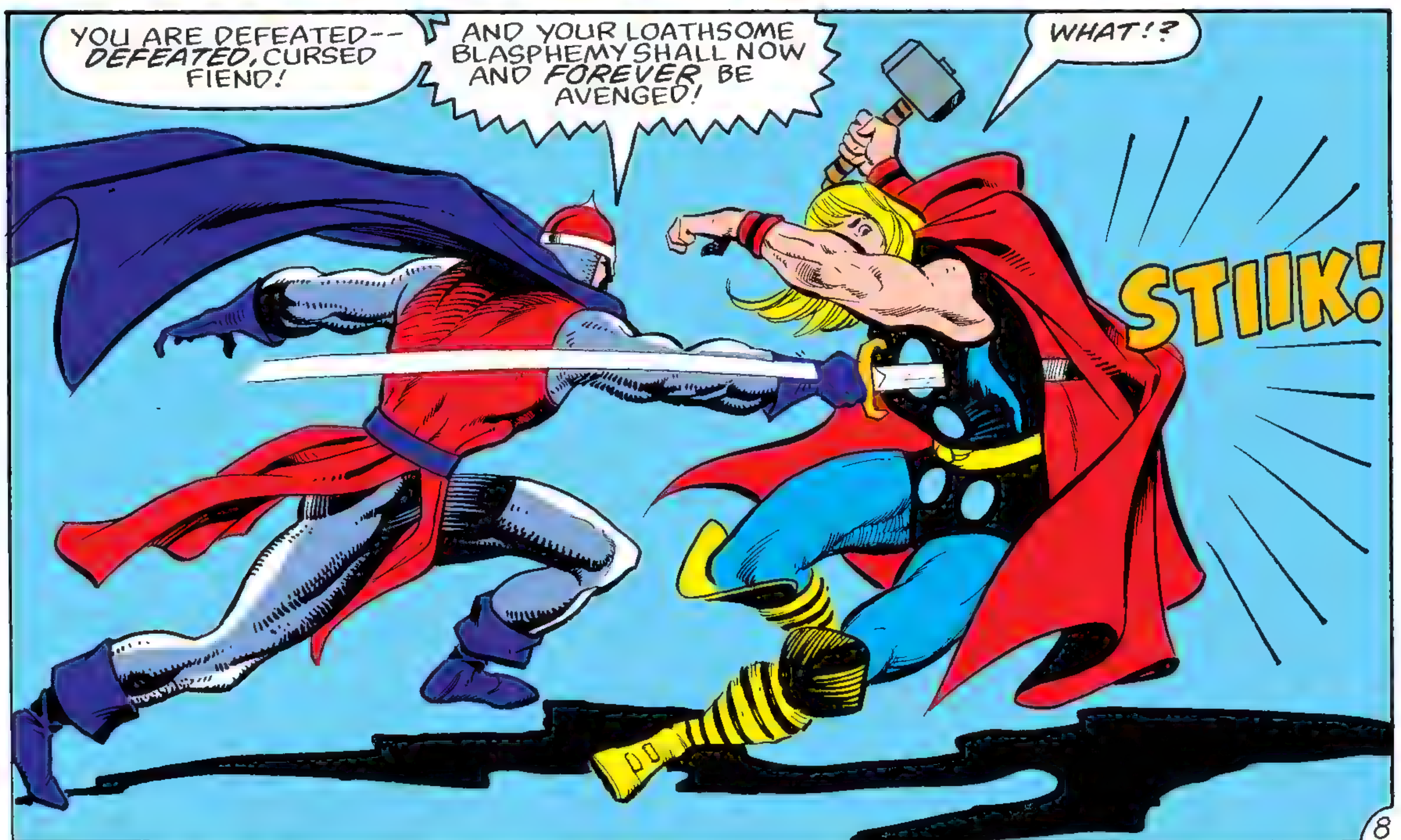
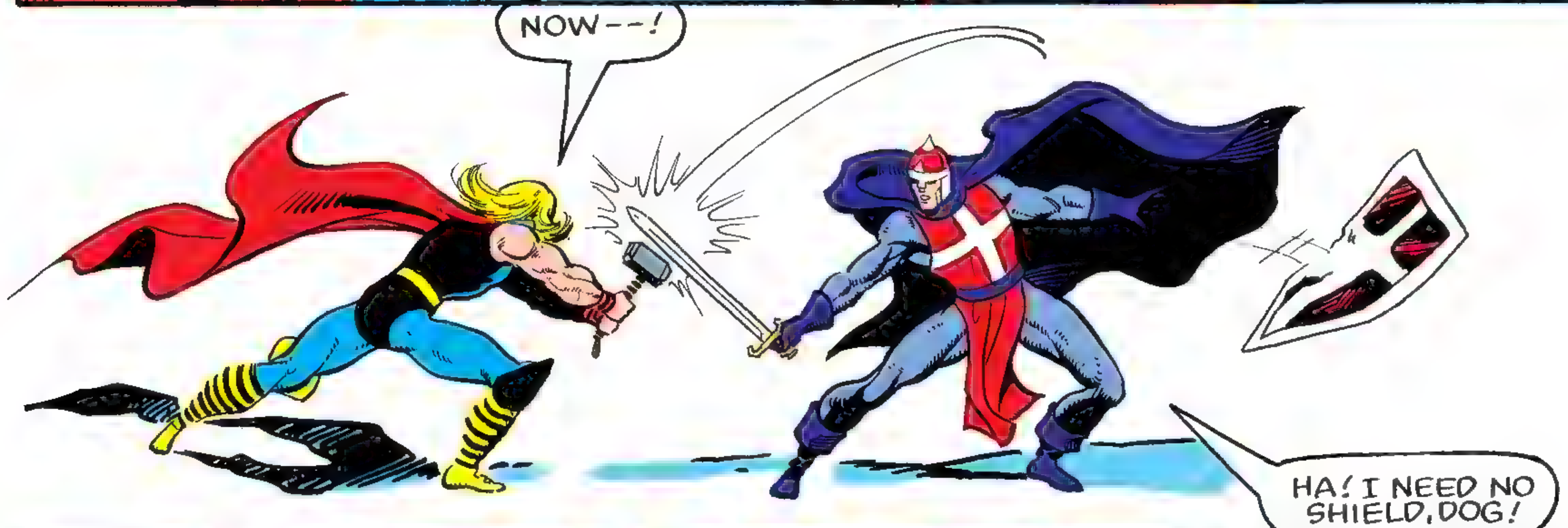


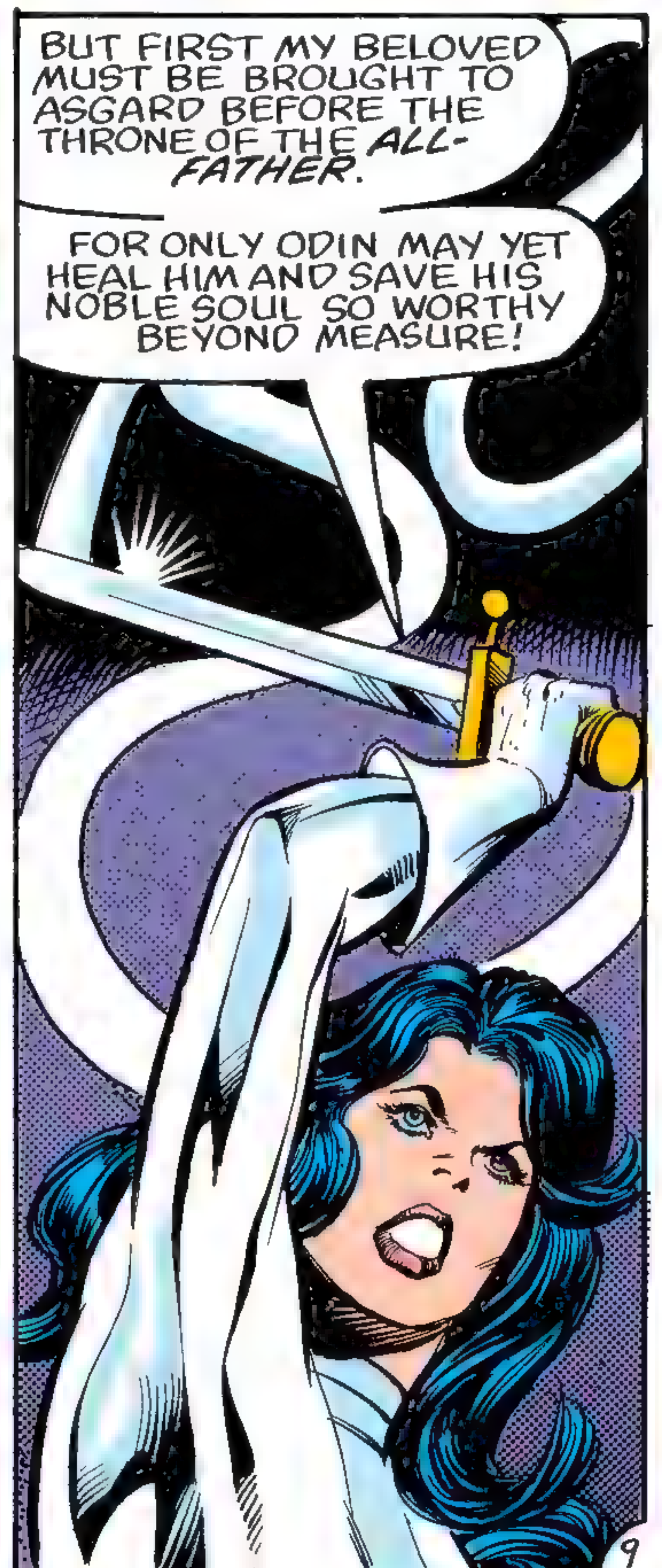
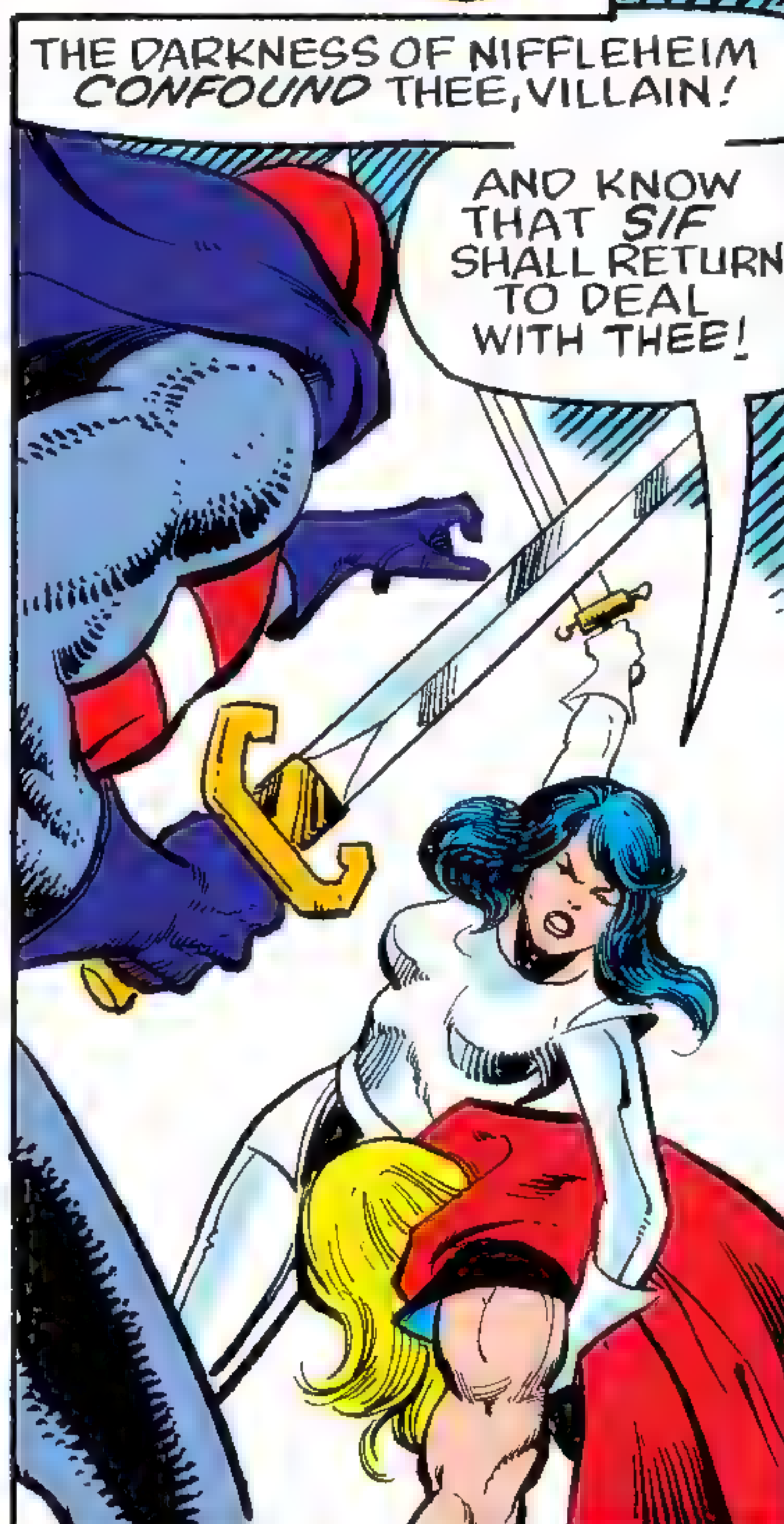
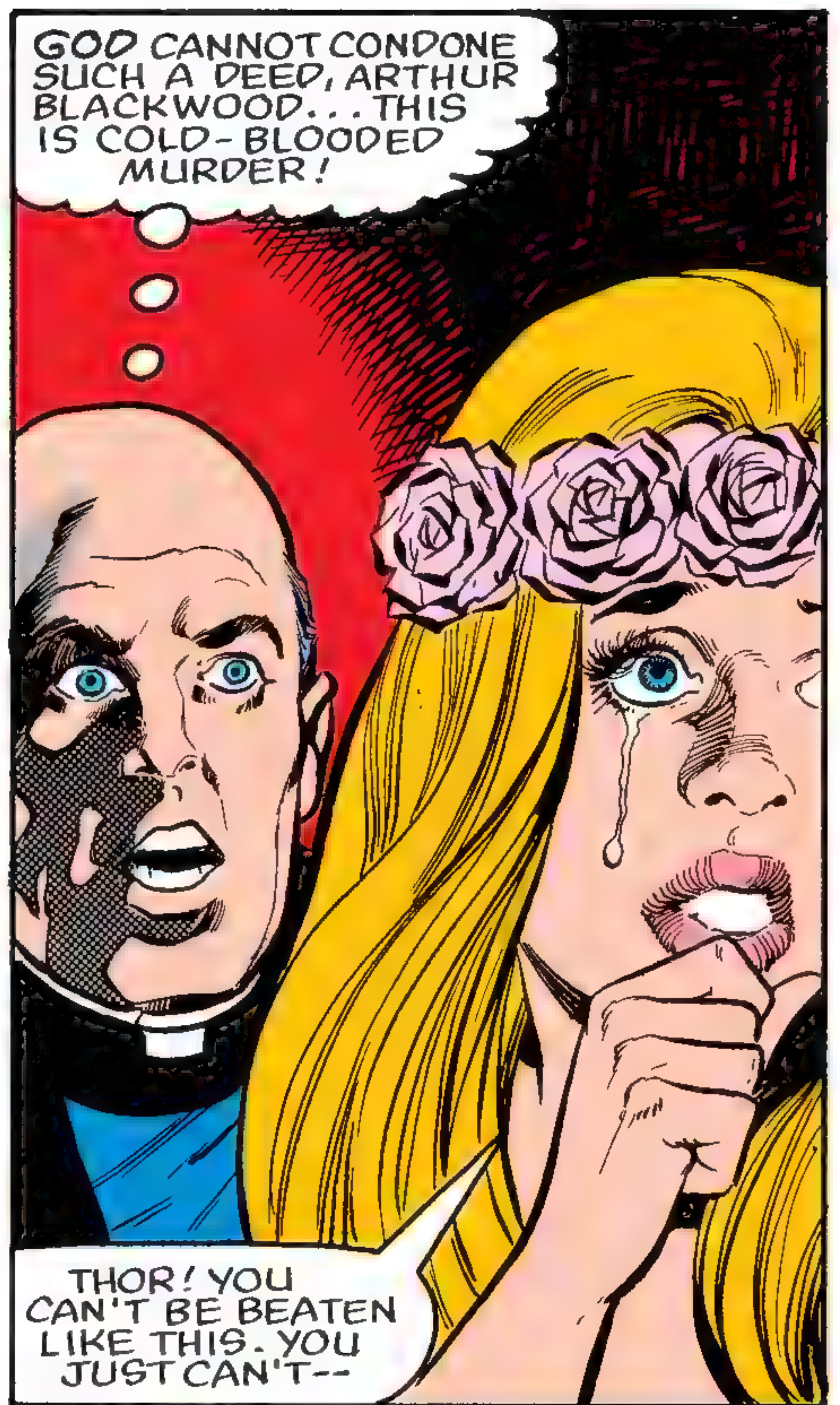
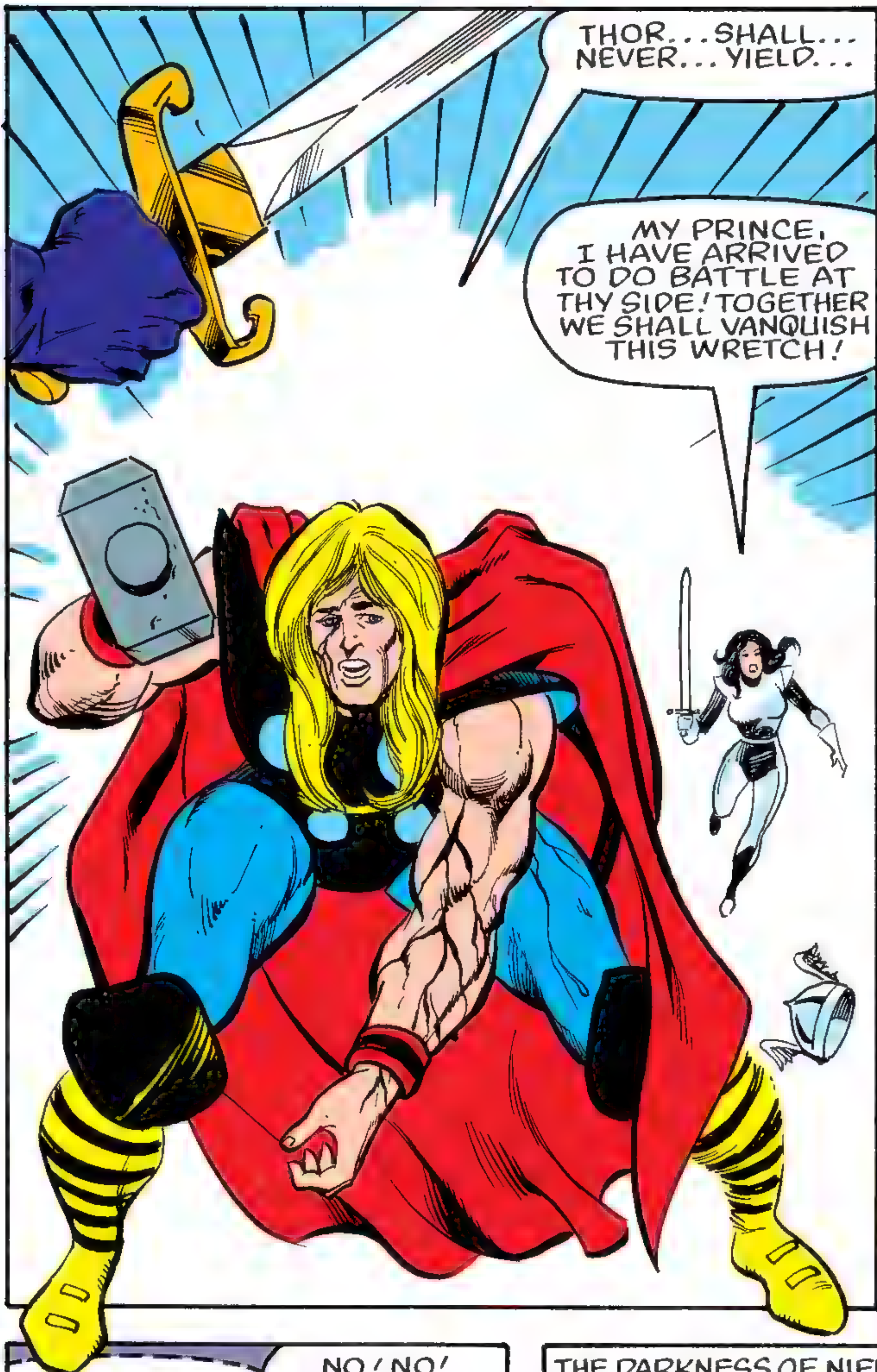




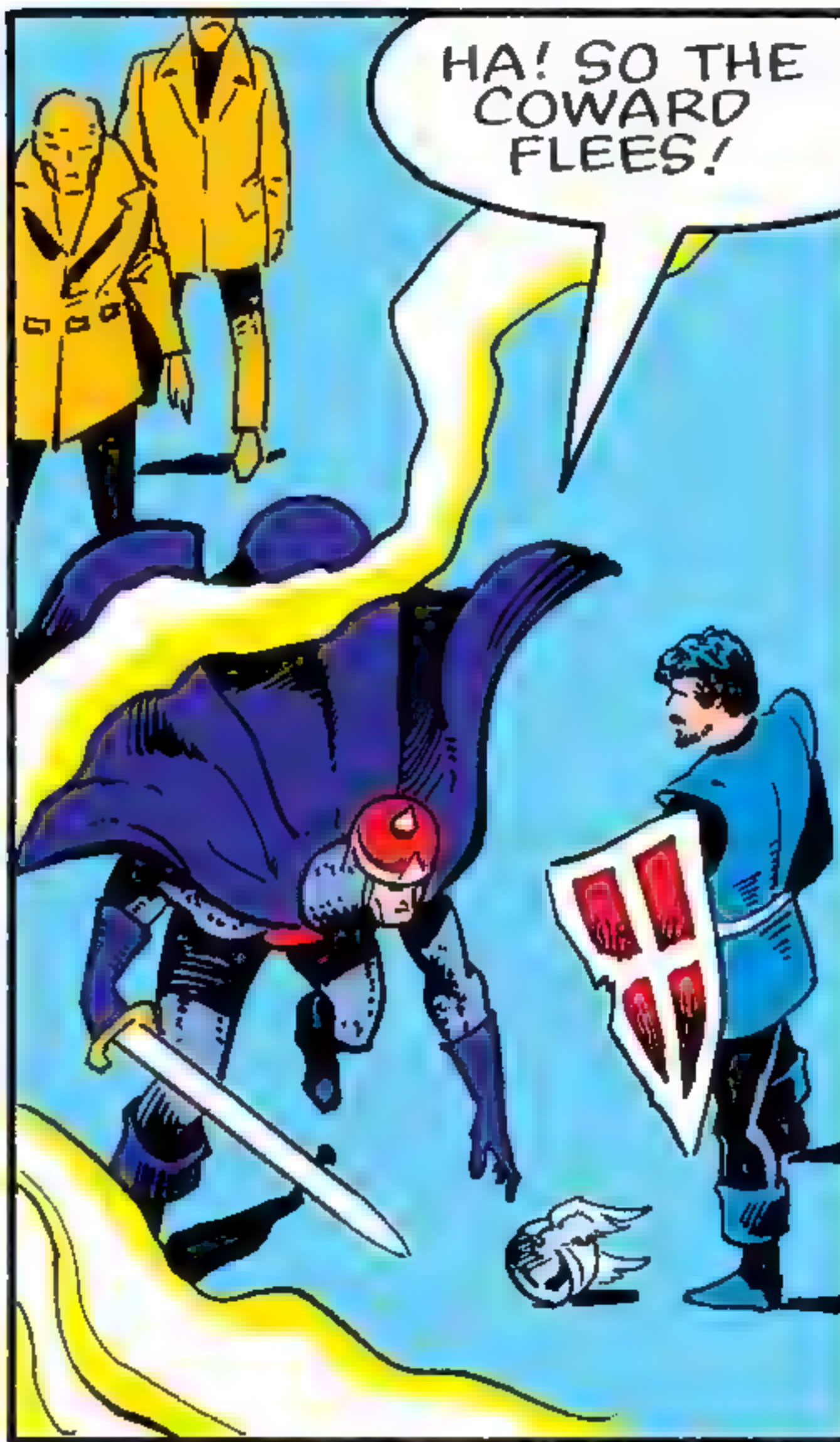
*SEE LAST ISSUE.







THUS, USING DIVINE ENCHANTMENT, SIF TRANSPORTS HER WOUNDED WARRIOR BEYOND THE SPACE OF EARTH'S DIMENSION.

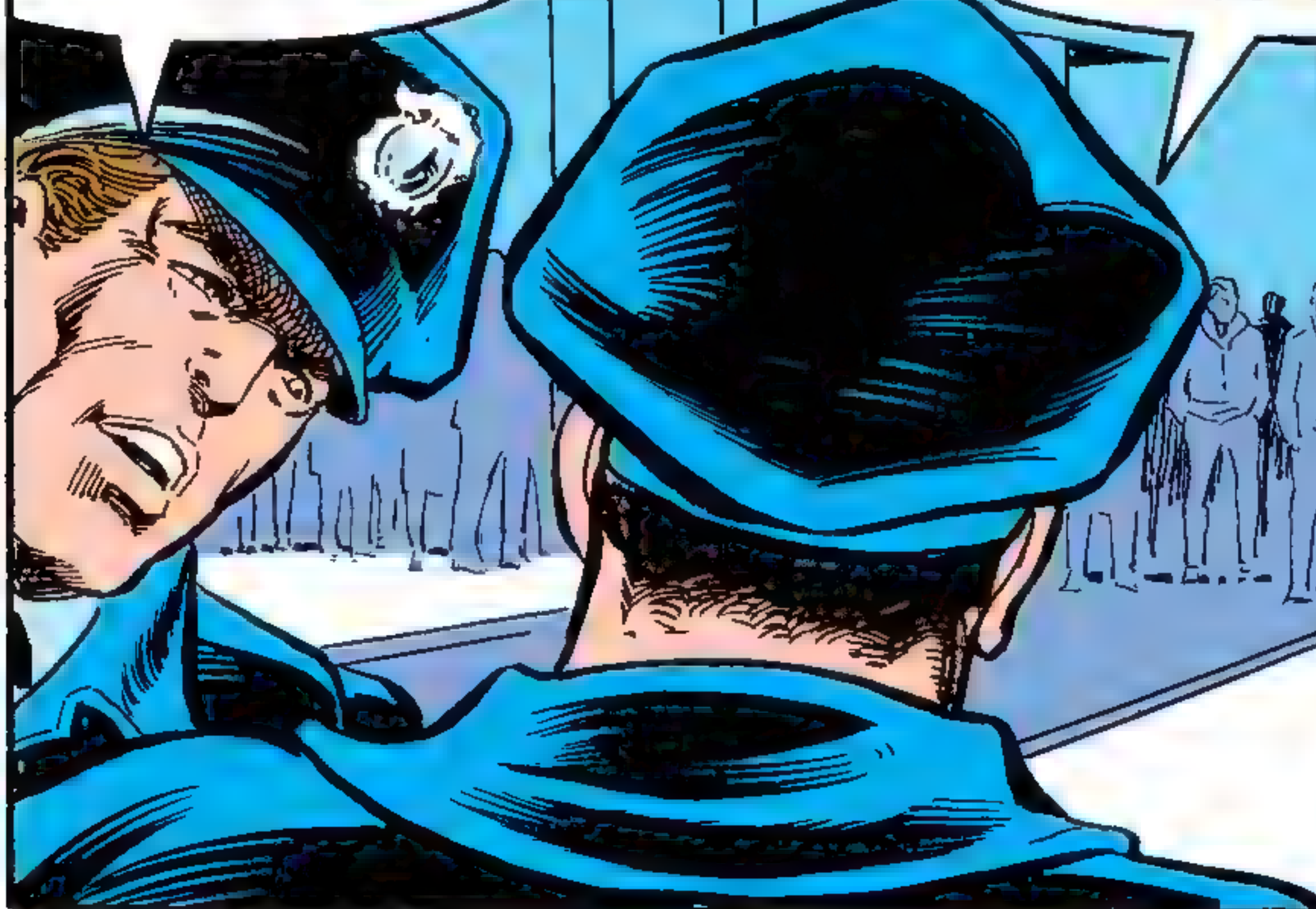


HA! SO THE COWARD FLEES!

WELL, WHY DO YOU JUST STAND THERE?! GET TO YOUR KNEES, AND THANK THE LORD FOR REDEEMING YOU THIS HOUR FROM THE VERY TEETH OF HERESY!

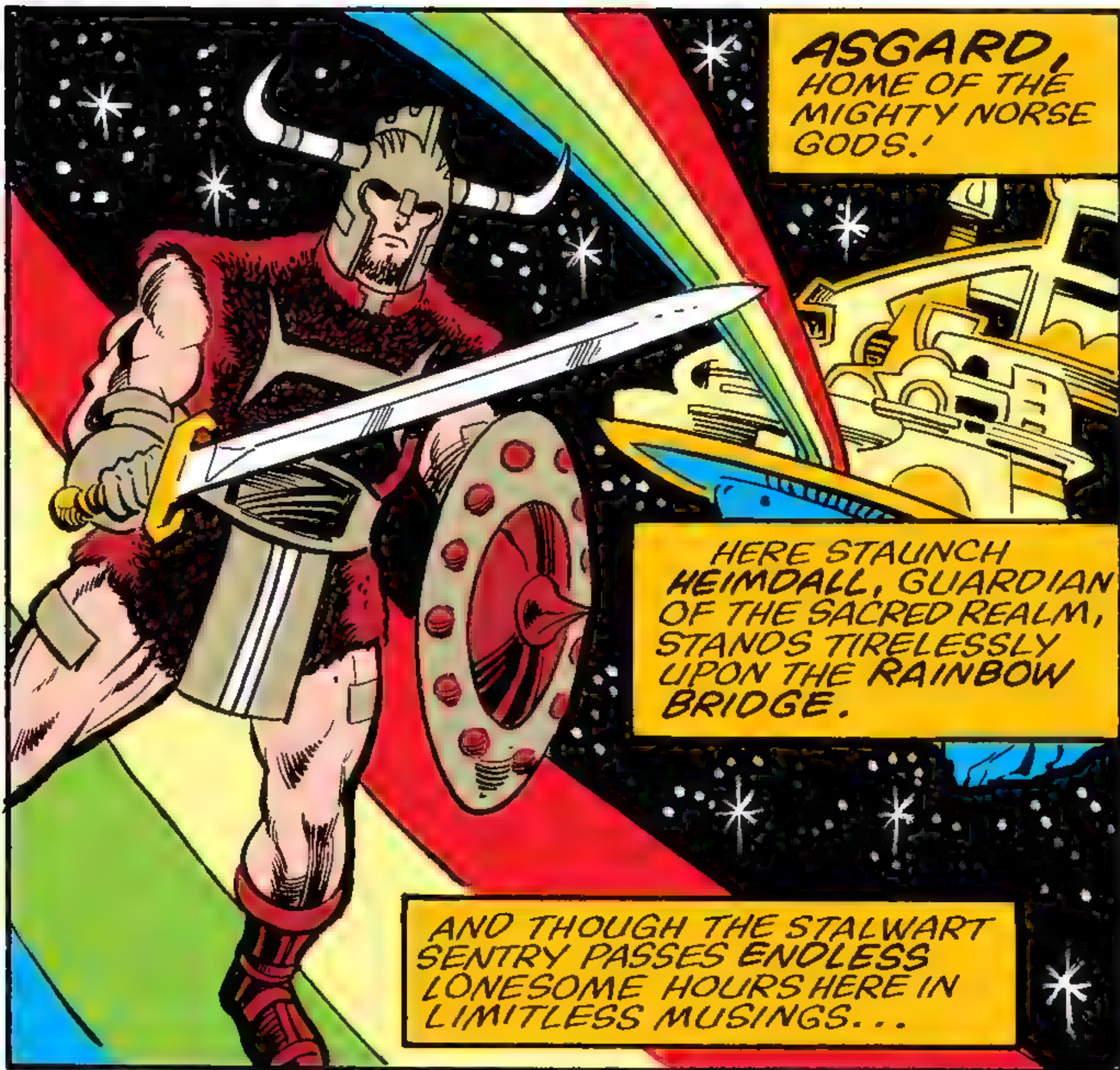
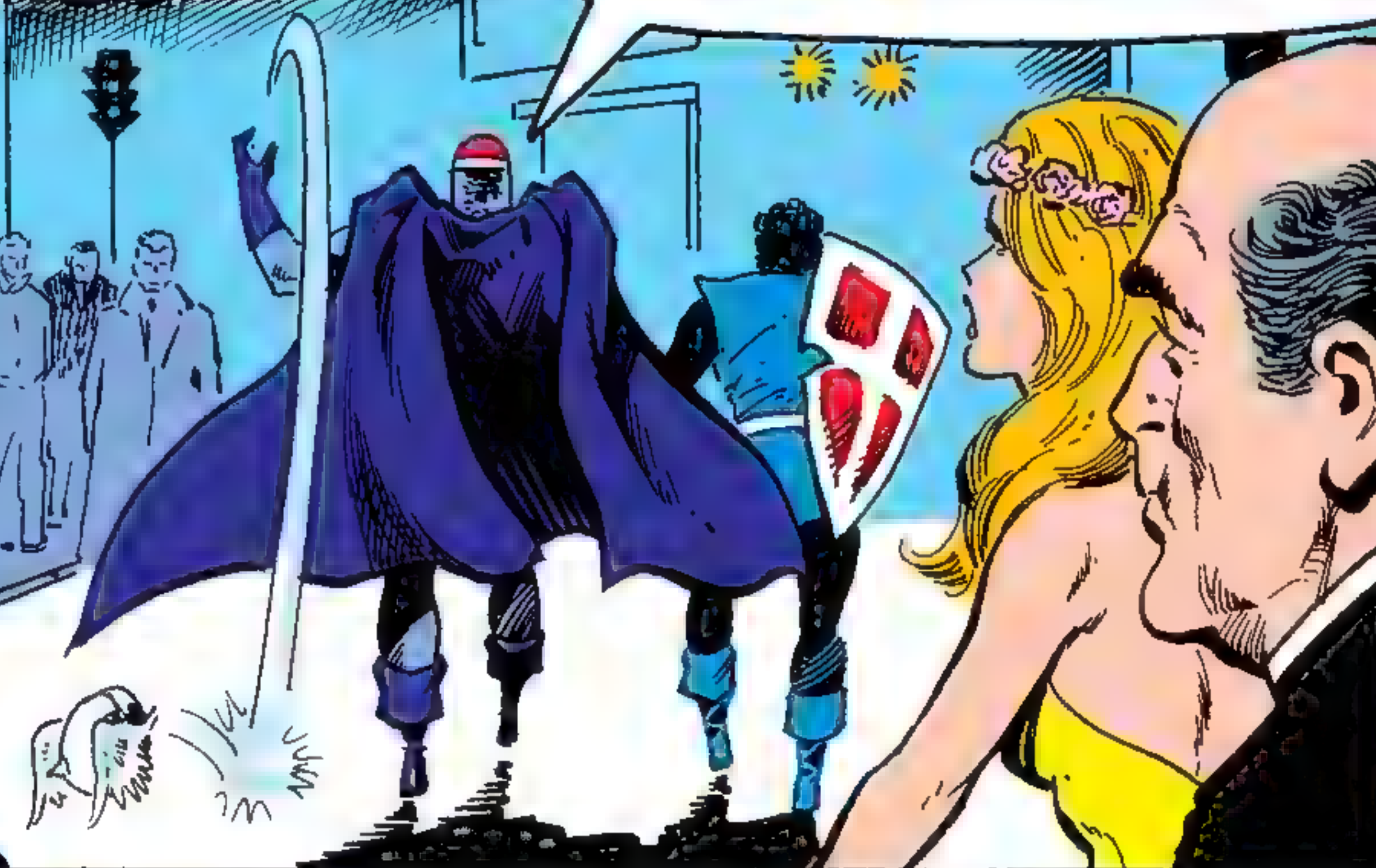


WHAT D'YA SAY, FRANKIE? DO WE ARREST HIM OR WHAT?



I'LL TELL YA', ED, I KINDA THINK THIS GUY'S WAY OUTTA OUR LEAGUE. I SAY LET'S CALL THE CAPTAIN.

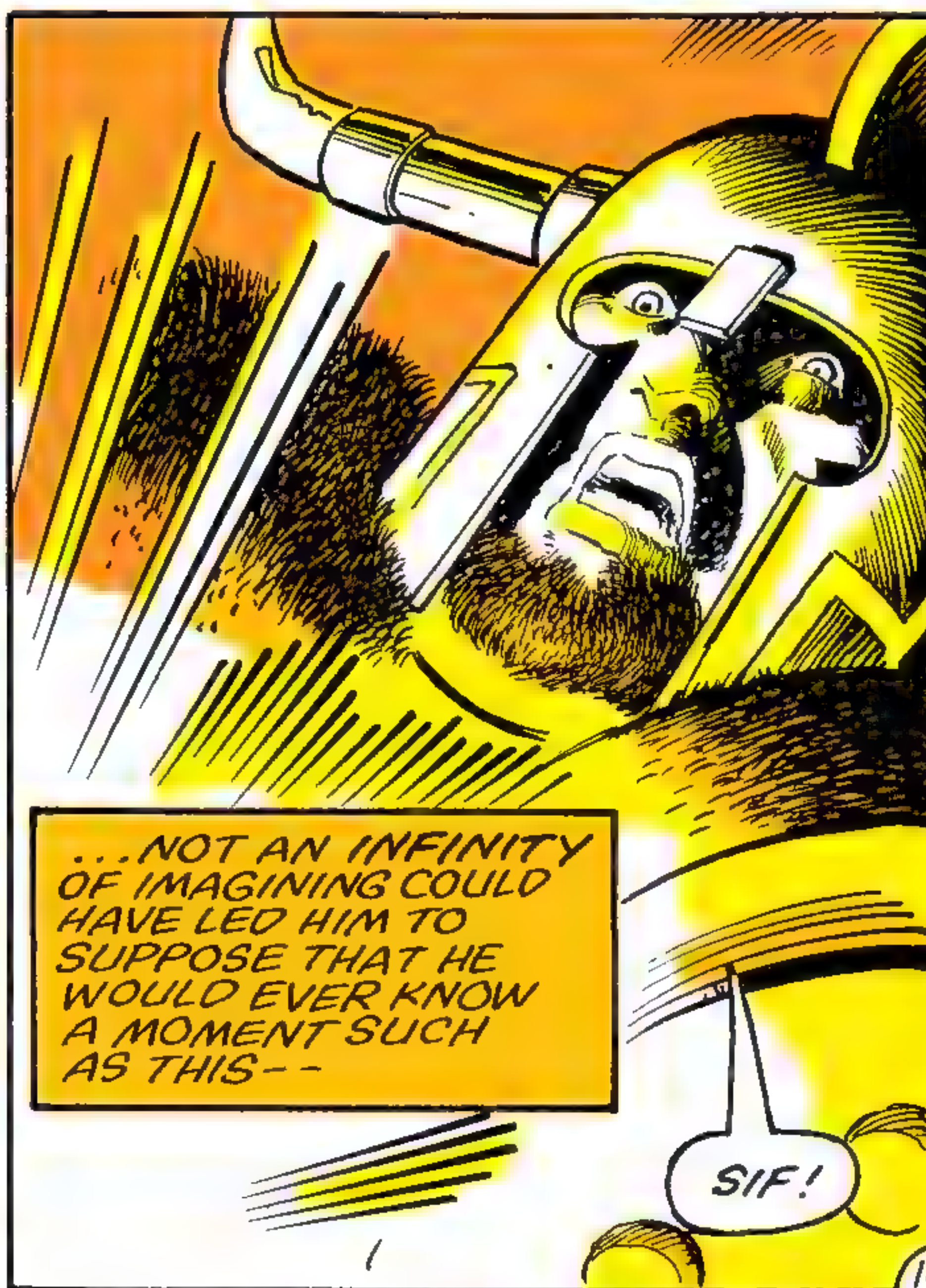
THEN PRAY THAT YOU BE GIVEN STRENGTH AND FAITH ENOUGH TO MERIT JOINING THE CRUSADER IN HIS HOLY WAR! COME, PELEUS!



ASGARD, HOME OF THE MIGHTY NORSE GODS!

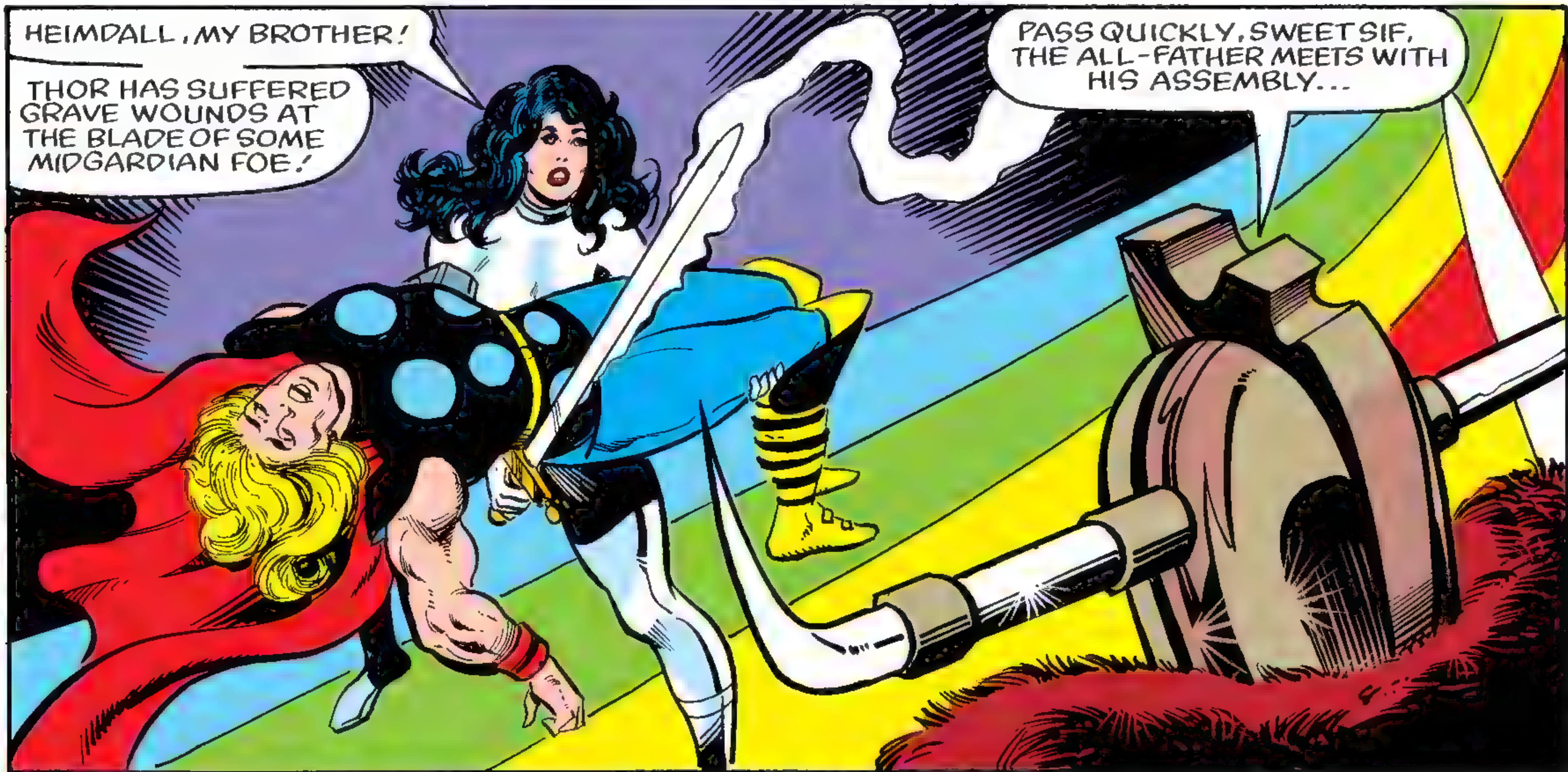
HERE STAUNCH HEIMDALL, GUARDIAN OF THE SACRED REALM, STANDS TIRELESSLY UPON THE RAINBOW BRIDGE.

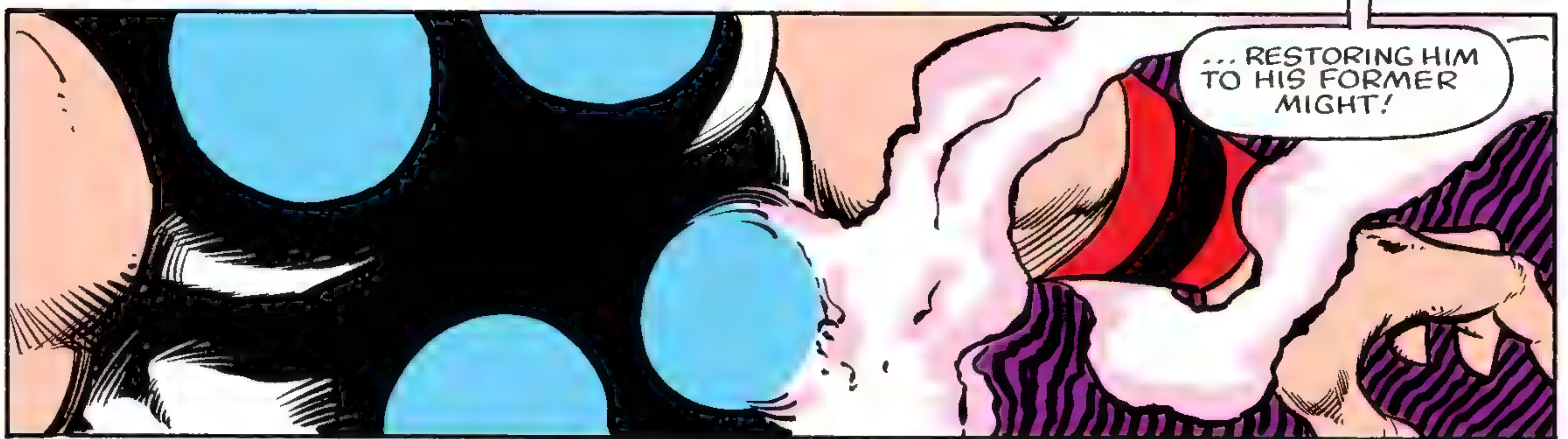
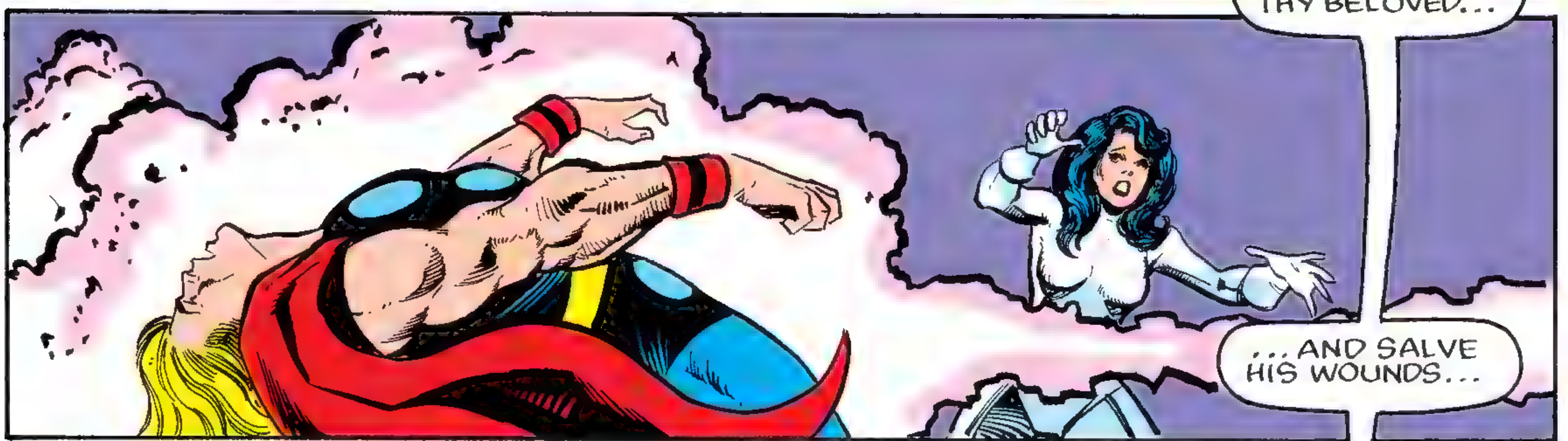
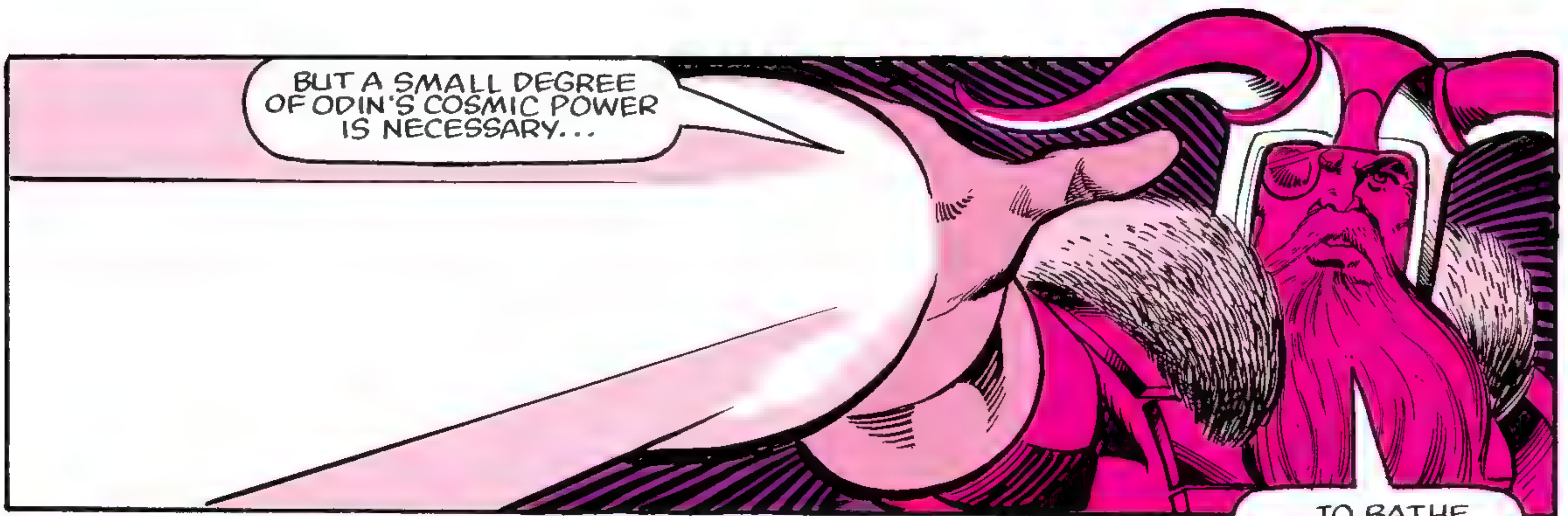
AND THOUGH THE STALWART SENTRY PASSES ENDLESS LONESOME HOURS HERE IN LIMITLESS MUSINGS...

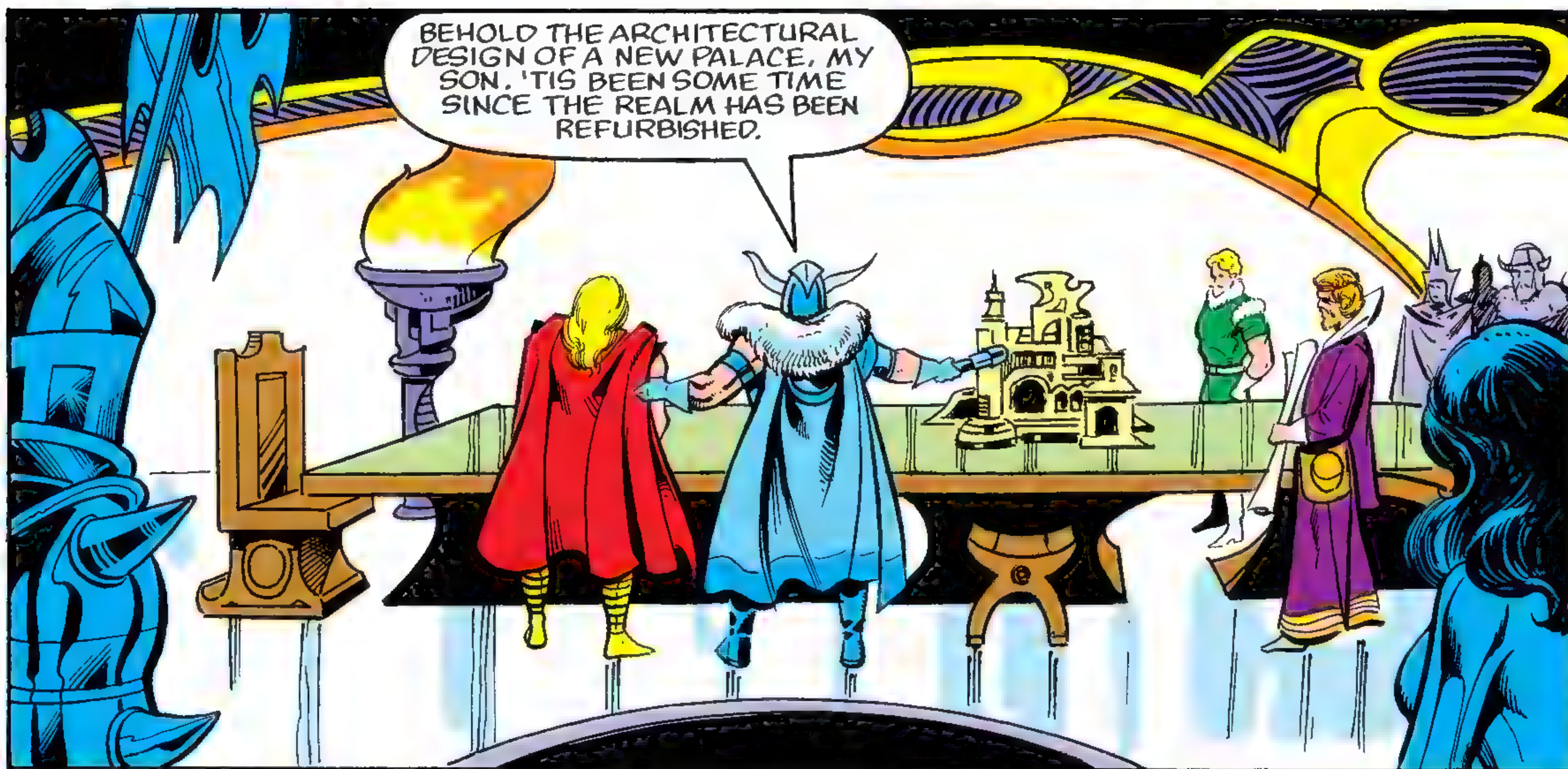


...NOT AN INFINITY OF IMAGINING COULD HAVE LED HIM TO SUPPOSE THAT HE WOULD EVER KNOW A MOMENT SUCH AS THIS--

SIF!



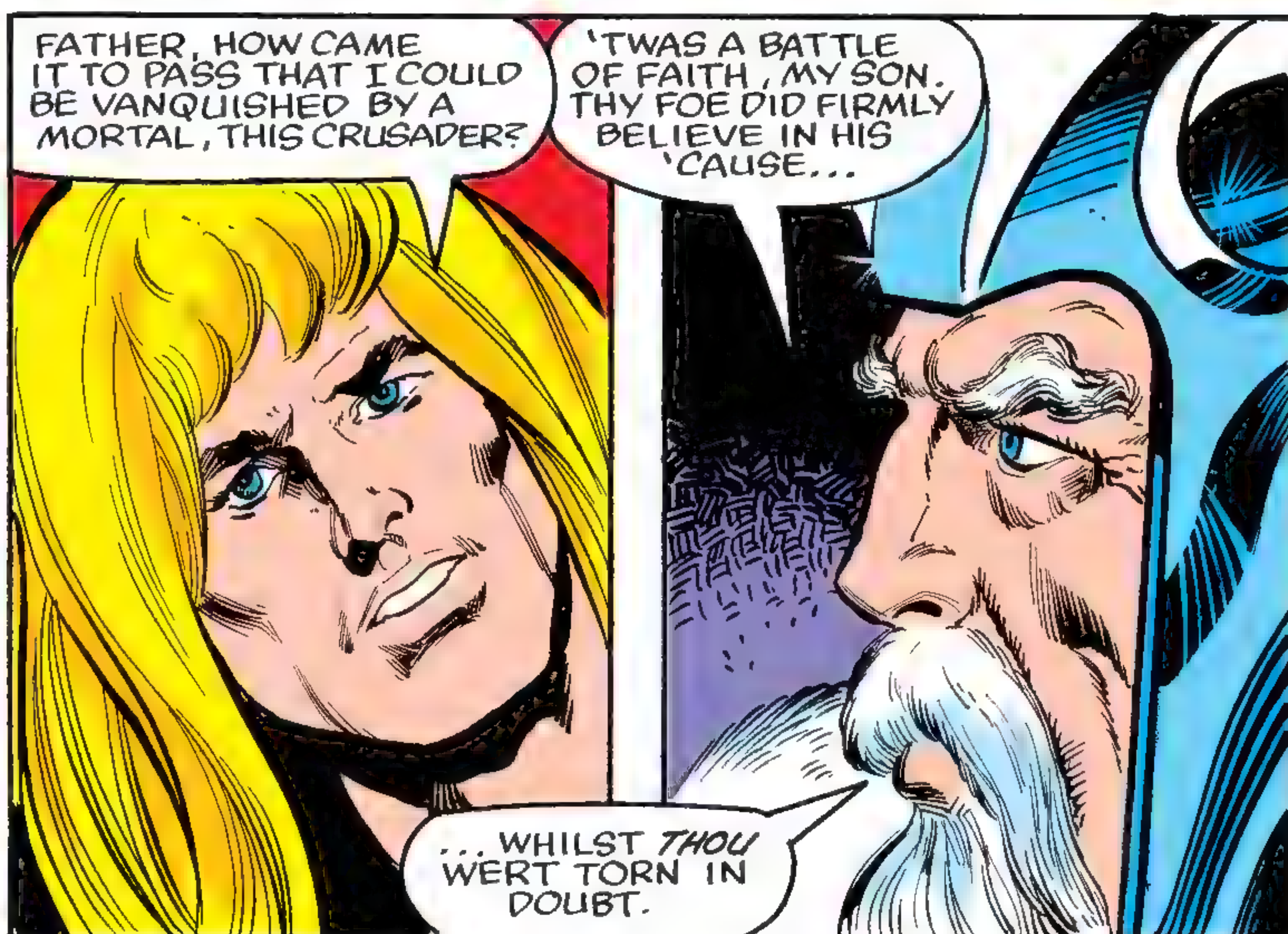




BEHOLD THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN OF A NEW PALACE, MY SON. 'TIS BEEN SOME TIME SINCE THE REALM HAS BEEN REFURBISHED.



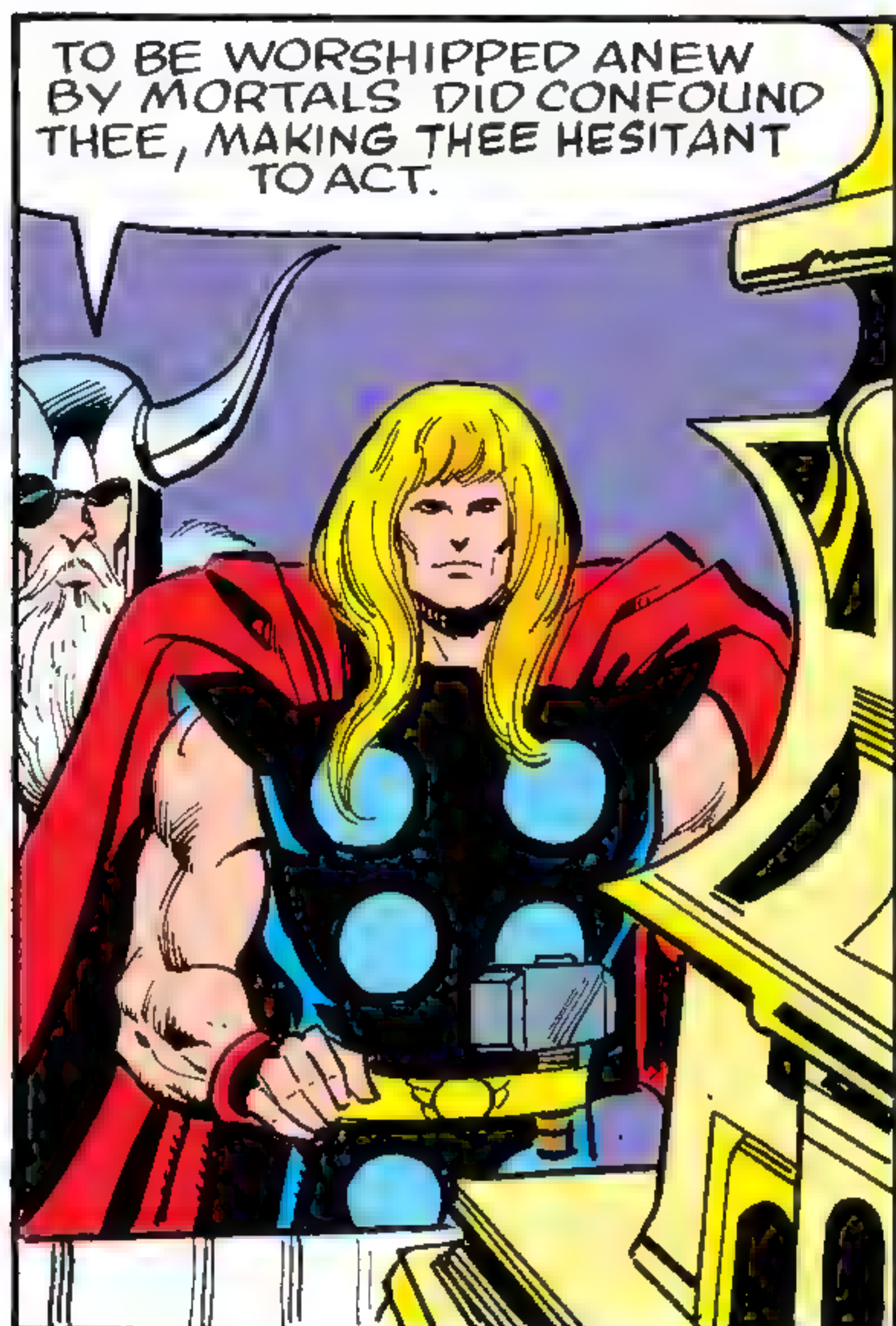
BUT I SEE THY THOUGHTS ARE FOREVER ON MIDGARD. WHAT IS IT THEN?



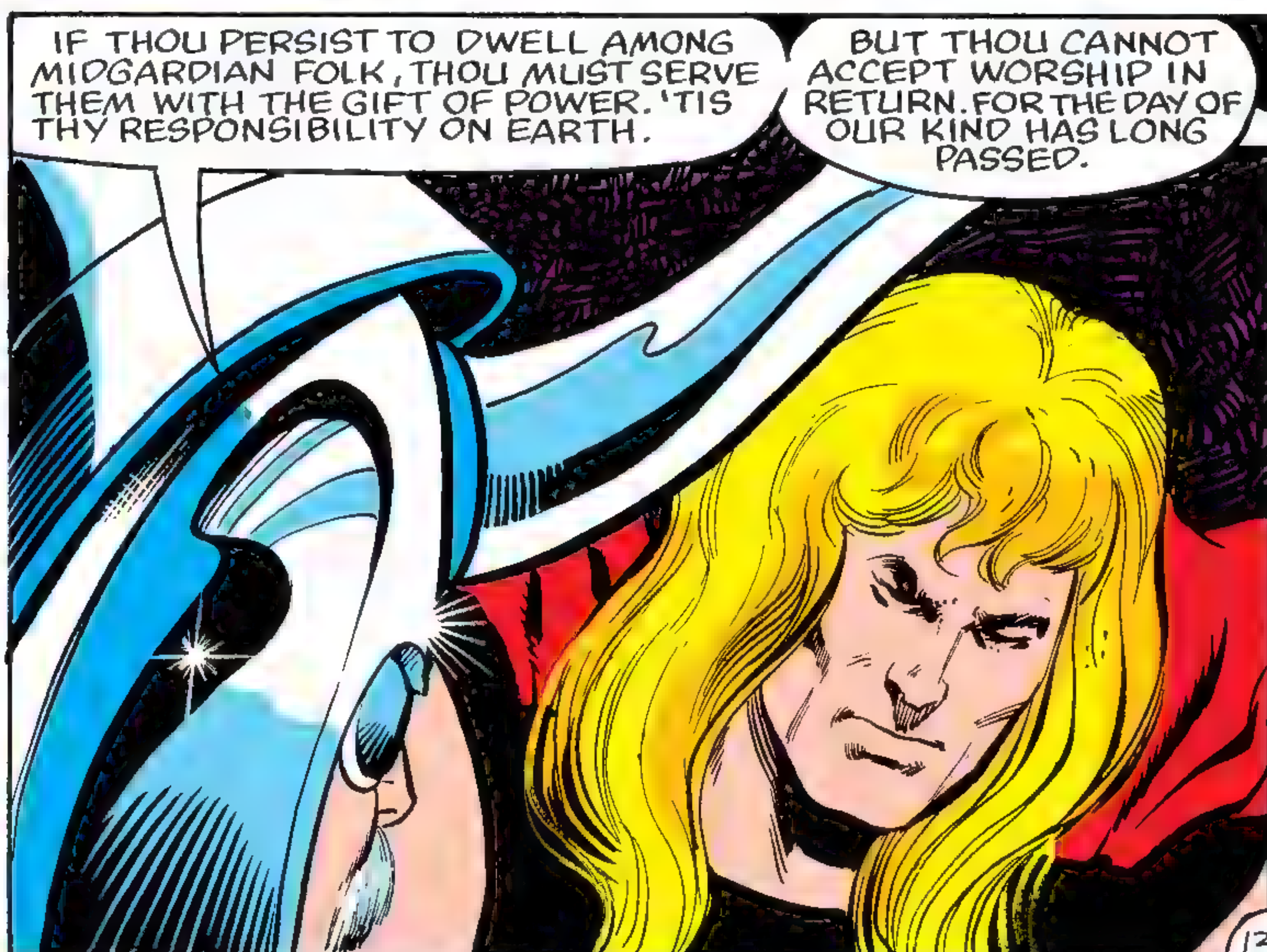
FATHER, HOW CAME IT TO PASS THAT I COULD BE VANQUISHED BY A MORTAL, THIS CRUSADER?

'T WAS A BATTLE OF FAITH, MY SON. THY FOE DID FIRMLY BELIEVE IN HIS 'CAUSE...

...WHILST THOU WERT TORN IN DOUBT.



TO BE WORSHIPPED ANEW BY MORTALS DID CONFOUND THEE, MAKING THEE HESITANT TO ACT.



IF THOU PERSIST TO DWELL AMONG MIDGARDIAN FOLK, THOU MUST SERVE THEM WITH THE GIFT OF POWER. 'TIS THY RESPONSIBILITY ON EARTH.

BUT THOU CANNOT ACCEPT WORSHIP IN RETURN. FOR THE DAY OF OUR KIND HAS LONG PASSED.

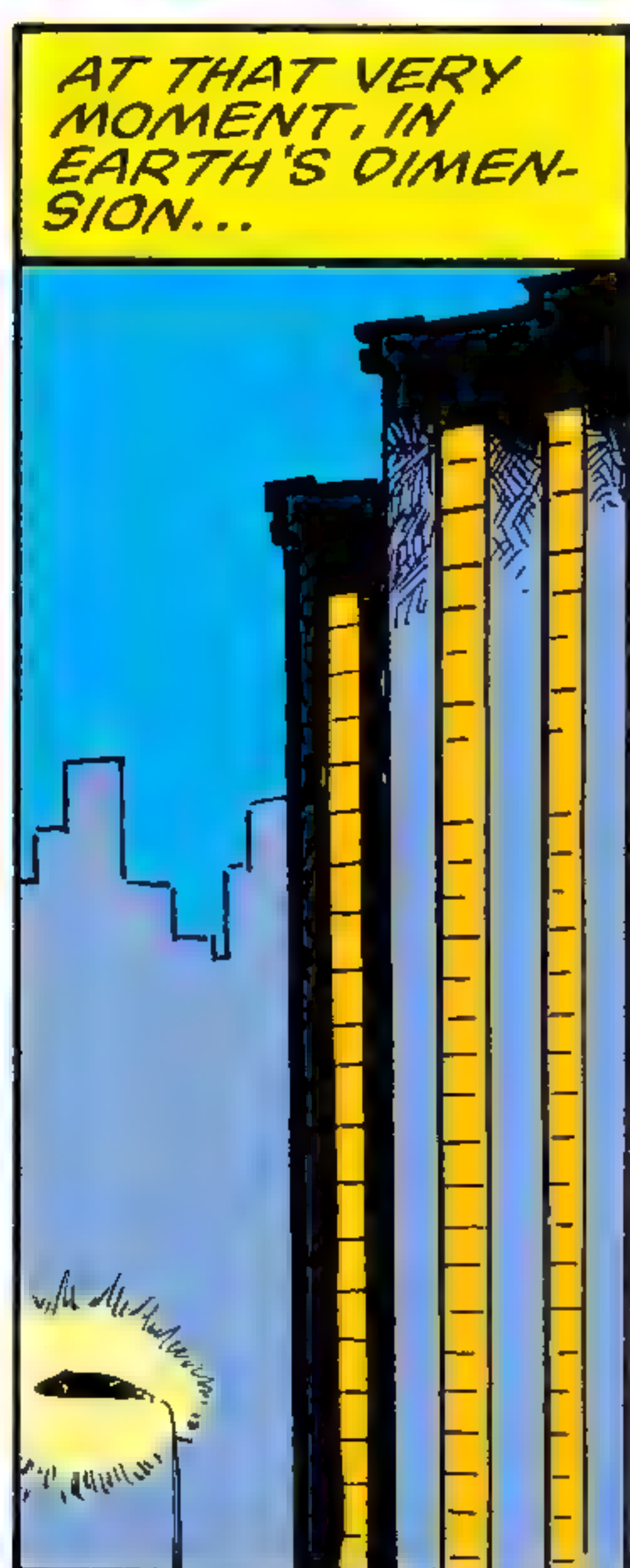


I HAVE MUCH TO MEDITATE UPON. THANK THEE FOR THY TIME. I MUST RETURN TO MIDGARD.

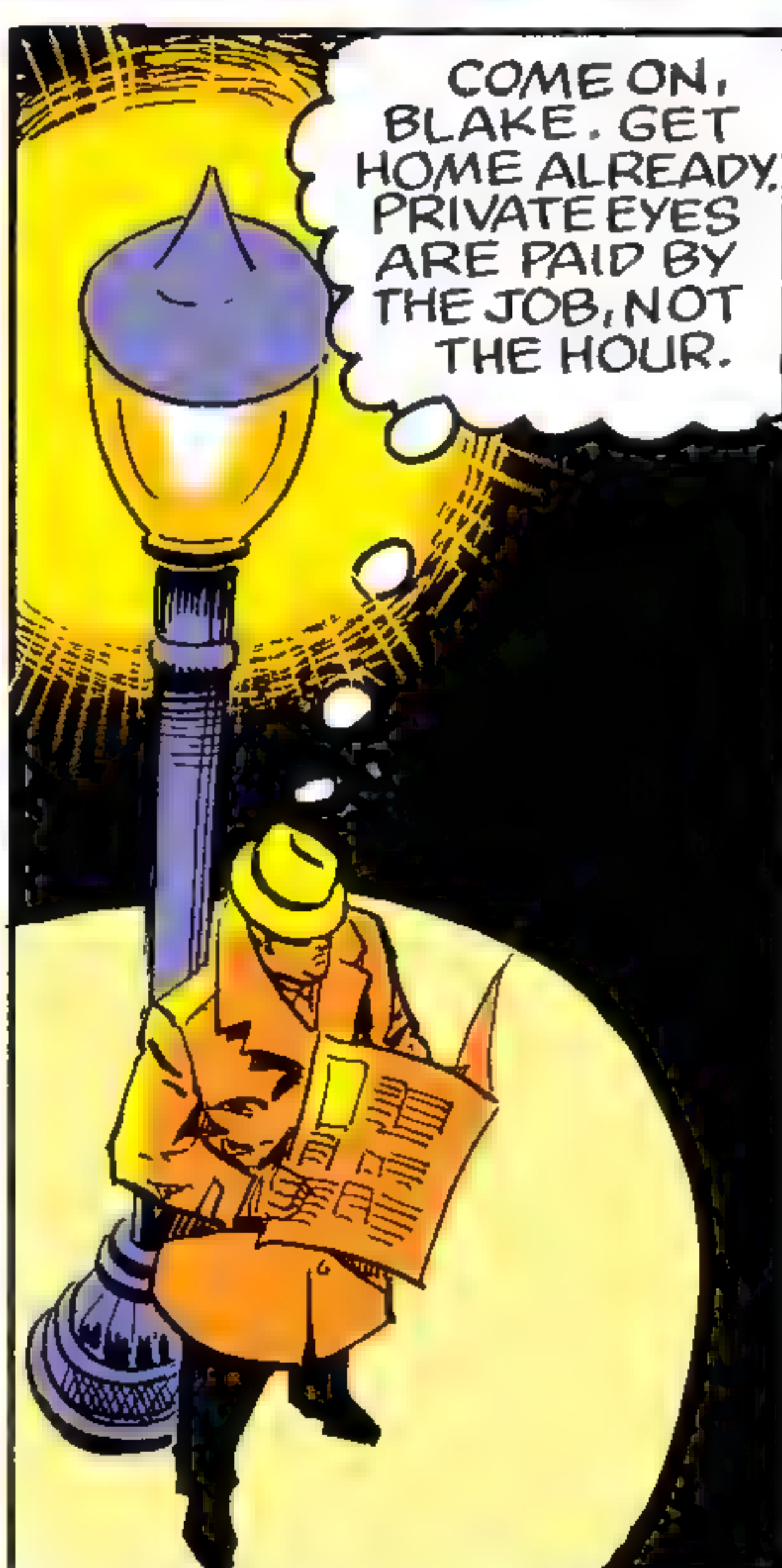
AND I TOO, SIRE, THOUGH IT BREAK MY VERY HEART IN TWAIN TO ABANDON THIS GOLDEN REALM, MY TRUE HOME.

BUT WHITHER MY BELOVED THOR GOES, THERE SIF SHALL FOLLOW.

THEN... FAREWELL



AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN EARTH'S DIMENSION...



COME ON, BLAKE. GET HOME ALREADY. PRIVATE EYES ARE PAID BY THE JOB, NOT THE HOUR.



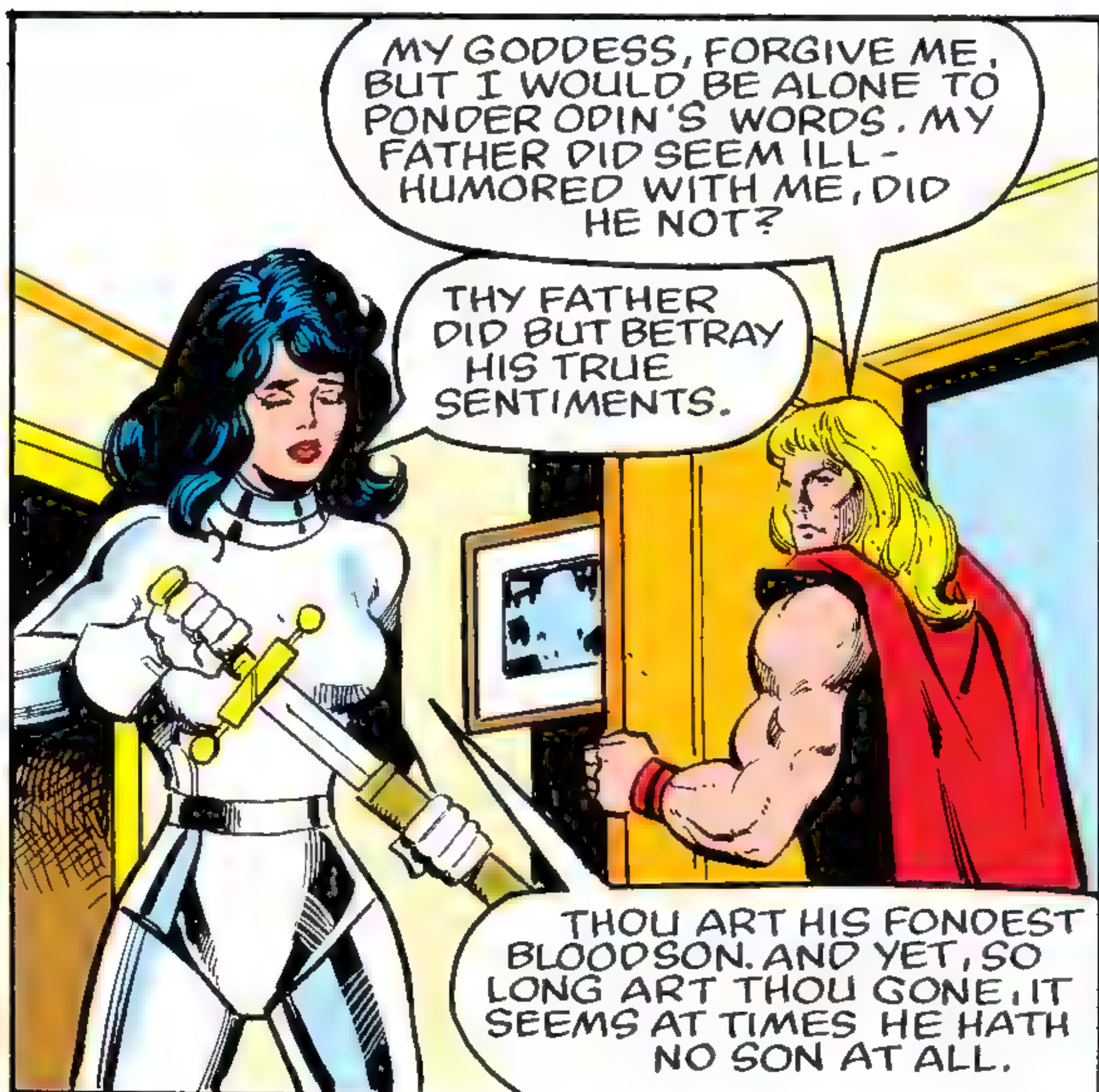
MY SWORD TRANSPORTS US BACK TO MIDGARD, MY LOVE.

HEY, IS THAT A LIGHT ON IN HIS APARTMENT?



NO. EYES MUST BE ACTING UP. I HOPE NOBODY SPIKED THE VISINE.

WELL, COME ON ALREADY, BLAKE, DON'T MAKE THIS AN ALL-NIGHT AFFAIR...



MY GODDESS, FORGIVE ME, BUT I WOULD BE ALONE TO PONDER ODIN'S WORDS. MY FATHER DID SEEM ILL-HUMORED WITH ME, DID HE NOT?

THY FATHER DID BUT BETRAY HIS TRUE SENTIMENTS.

THOU ART HIS FONDEST BLOODSON. AND YET, SO LONG ART THOU GONE, IT SEEMS AT TIMES HE HATH NO SON AT ALL.



NOR I A LOVER. STILL, 'T WAS MY OWN CHOICE-- AND MINE ALONE-- TO RETURN TO EARTH.

'TIS FOLLY, I KNOW, TO HAVE FOLLOWED THEE, MY PRINCE. BUT THEN THE HEART HATH ITS OWN REASONS, WHICH REASON ITSELF CANNOT HOPE TO UNDERSTAND.

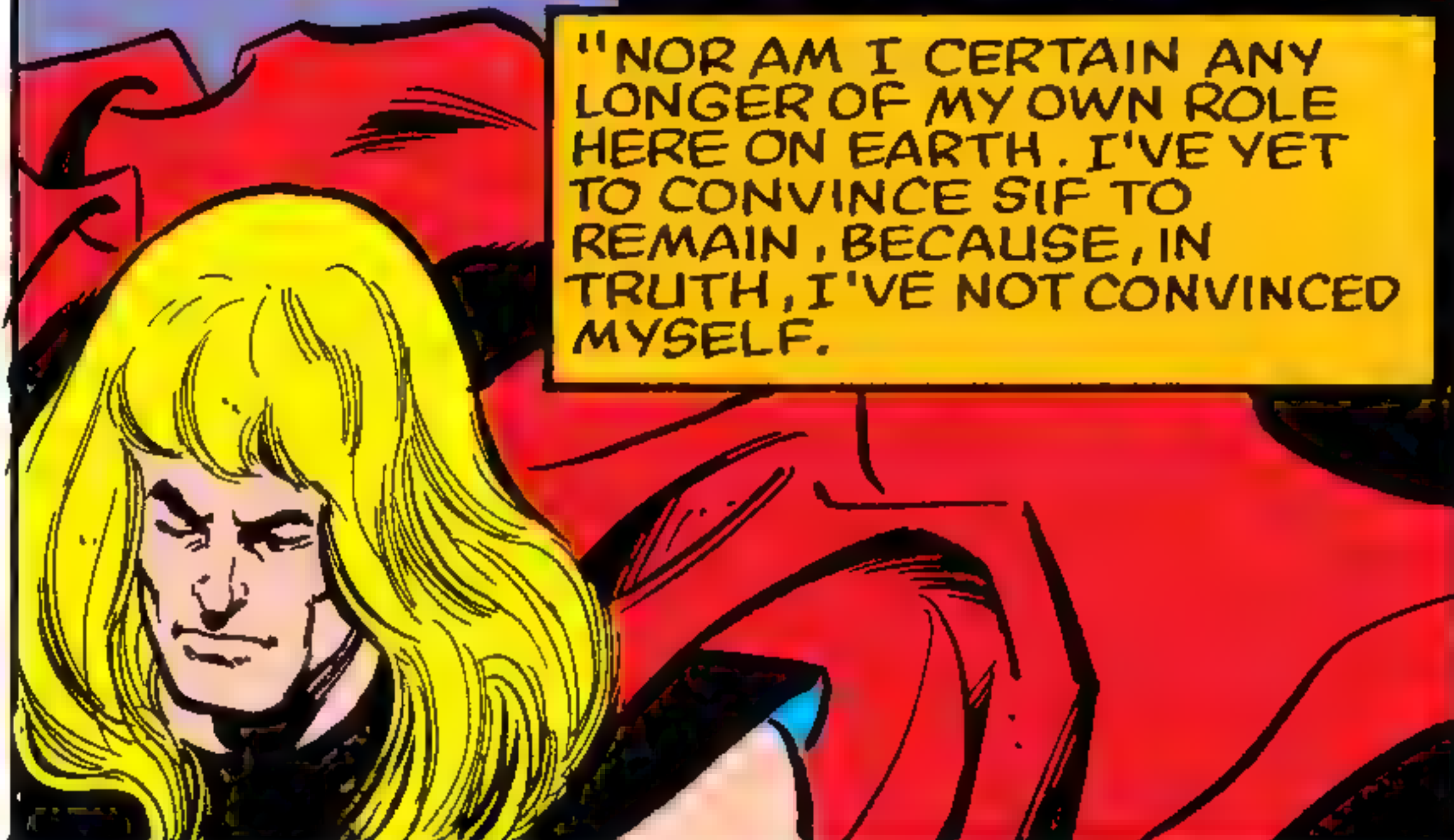
"SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED
IN SO LITTLE TIME.



"NOT FIVE DAYS PAST, MY GODDESS SIF
JOINED ME HERE AND PLEADED I FORSWEAR
MY MORTAL GUISE OF DONALD BLAKE
AND RETURN WITH HER TO CELESTIAL
ASSGARD.

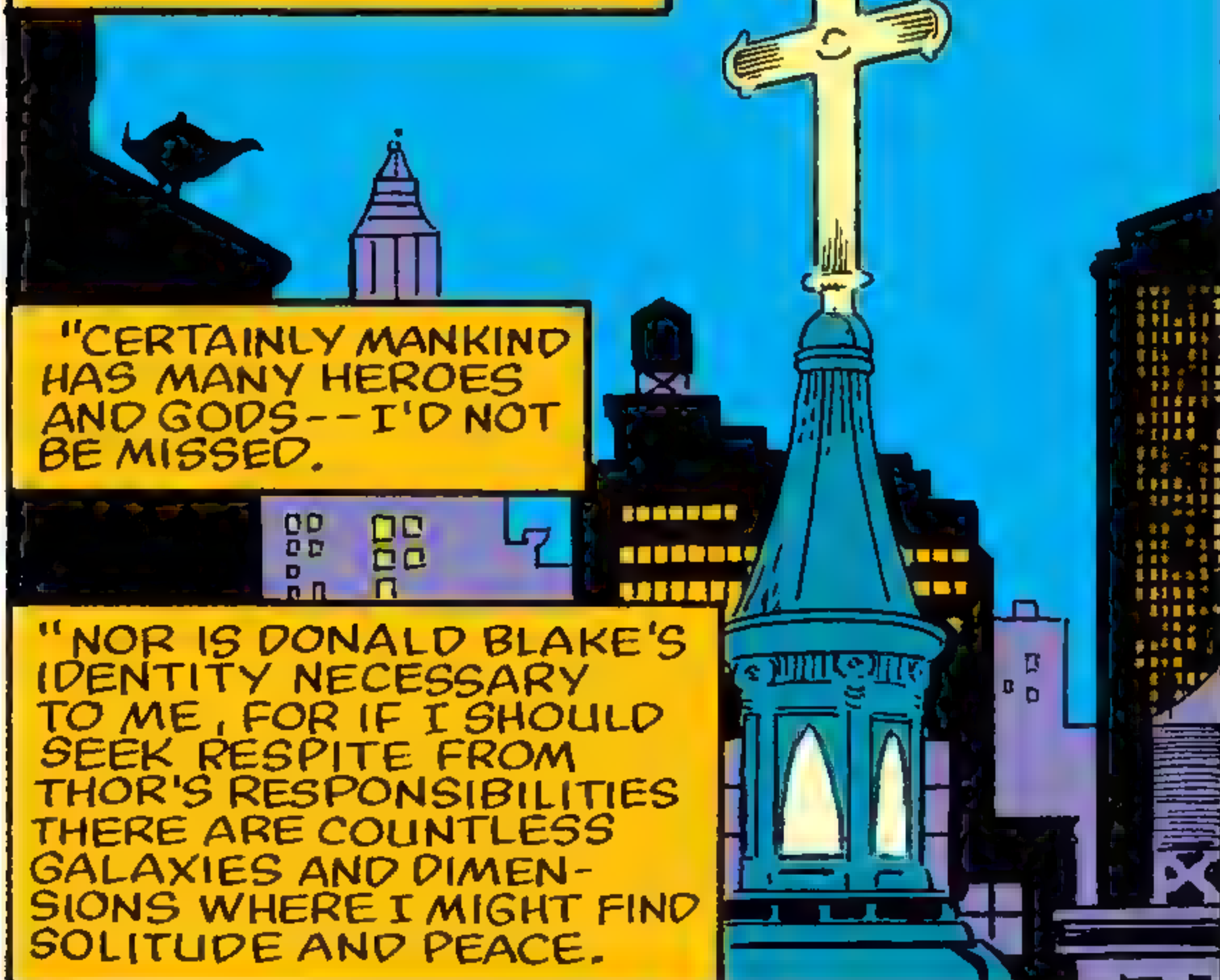
"THEN ONLY TWO DAYS GONE A BAND
OF YOUTHS SOUGHT THOR AND BOWED
THEIR KNEES TO HIM, AS ONCE DID
MEN OF OLD. THEY WOULD HAVE ME
STAY ON EARTH AND BE THEIR OBJECT
OF DEVOTION.

"BUT NOW THIS VERY NIGHT
CAME THE CRUSADER TO SLAY
THOR AS ABHORRENT TO
MANKIND."



"NOR AM I CERTAIN ANY
LONGER OF MY OWN ROLE
HERE ON EARTH. I'VE YET
TO CONVINCE SIF TO
REMAIN, BECAUSE, IN
TRUTH, I'VE NOT CONVINCED
MYSELF.

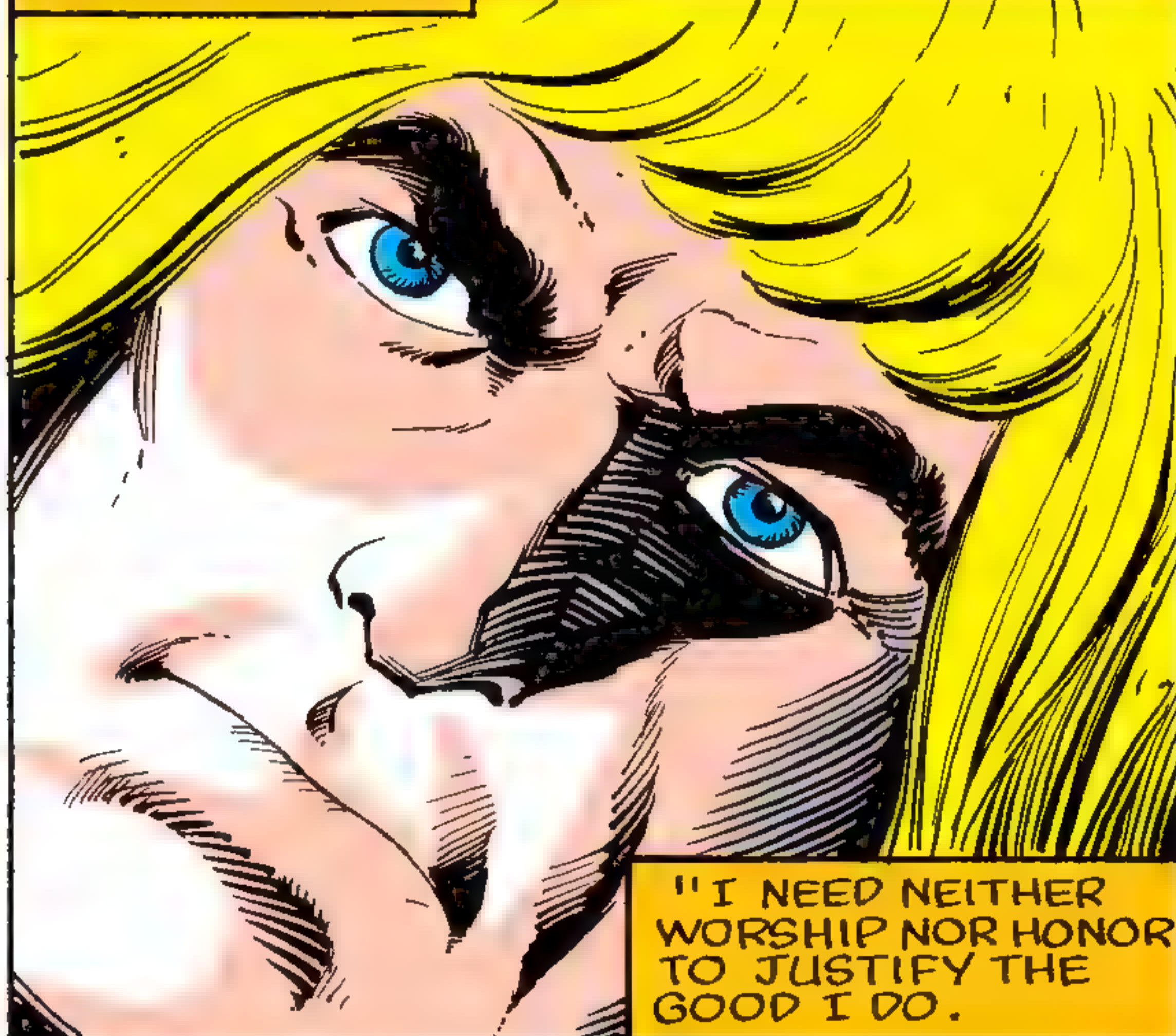
"DID I TRULY EXPECT A
GODDESS TO BE SWAYED
BY EARTHLY SPIRES OF
STEEL AND GLASS?"



"CERTAINLY MANKIND
HAS MANY HEROES
AND GODS-- I'D NOT
BE MISSED.

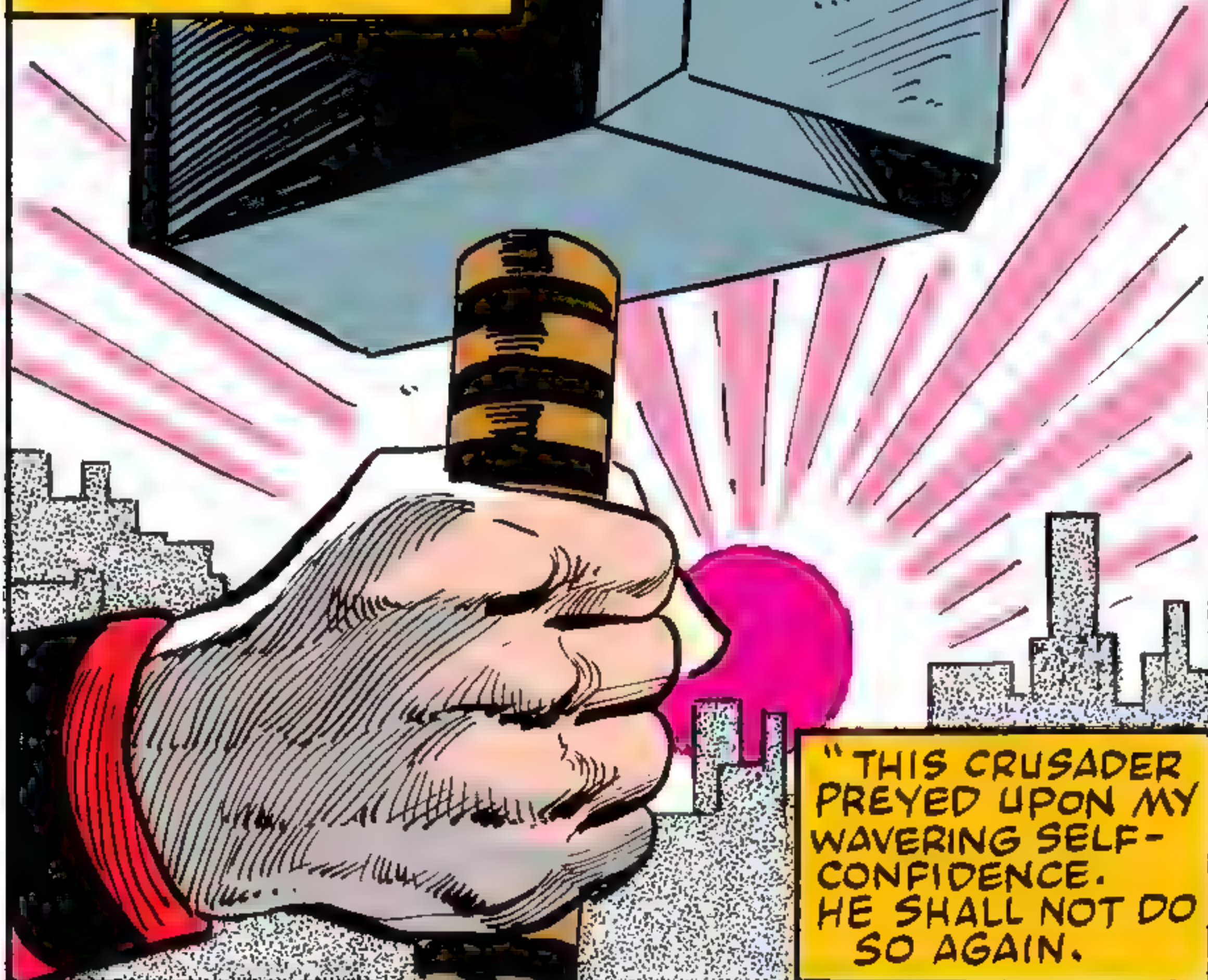
"NOR IS DONALD BLAKE'S
IDENTITY NECESSARY
TO ME, FOR IF I SHOULD
SEEK RESPITE FROM
THOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES
THERE ARE COUNTLESS
GALAXIES AND DIMEN-
SIONS WHERE I MIGHT FIND
SOLITUDE AND PEACE.

"AND YET I STILL HAVE FAITH THAT MY MISSION
ON EARTH IS JUST.



"I NEED NEITHER
WORSHIP NOR HONOR
TO JUSTIFY THE
GOOD I DO.

"'TIS ENOUGH I
POSSESS THE
POWER AND FAITH
TO DO SUCH GOOD
AT ALL.



"THIS CRUSADER
PREYED UPON MY
WAVERING SELF-
CONFIDENCE.
HE SHALL NOT DO
SO AGAIN.

AYE, NOW WILL I SEEK
THE CRUSADER ONCE
AGAIN. FOR HE KNOWS
ONLY HATRED, AND HIS
SENTIMENT BESMIRCHES
THE BENEVOLENT GOD
BEHIND WHOSE NAME
HE HIDES!

TO DEFEAT HIM
WILL BE A TRUE
EXAMPLE OF MY
ROLE ON EARTH!



DAWN... AND THERE ARE THOSE WHO'VE LINGERED AT THE CIVIC CENTER THROUGH THE CHILL OF THE NIGHT...

READ THE TRUTH, SINNERS, AND REPENT!

SOME ARE CONFUSED BY EVENTS...

WHERE CAN OUR BELOVED THOR HAVE GONE?

... OTHERS ANGERED BY THEM...

WHY YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED TO CALL YOURSELF A MAN OF THE CLOTH, HANGING OUT WITH THESE HEATHENS!

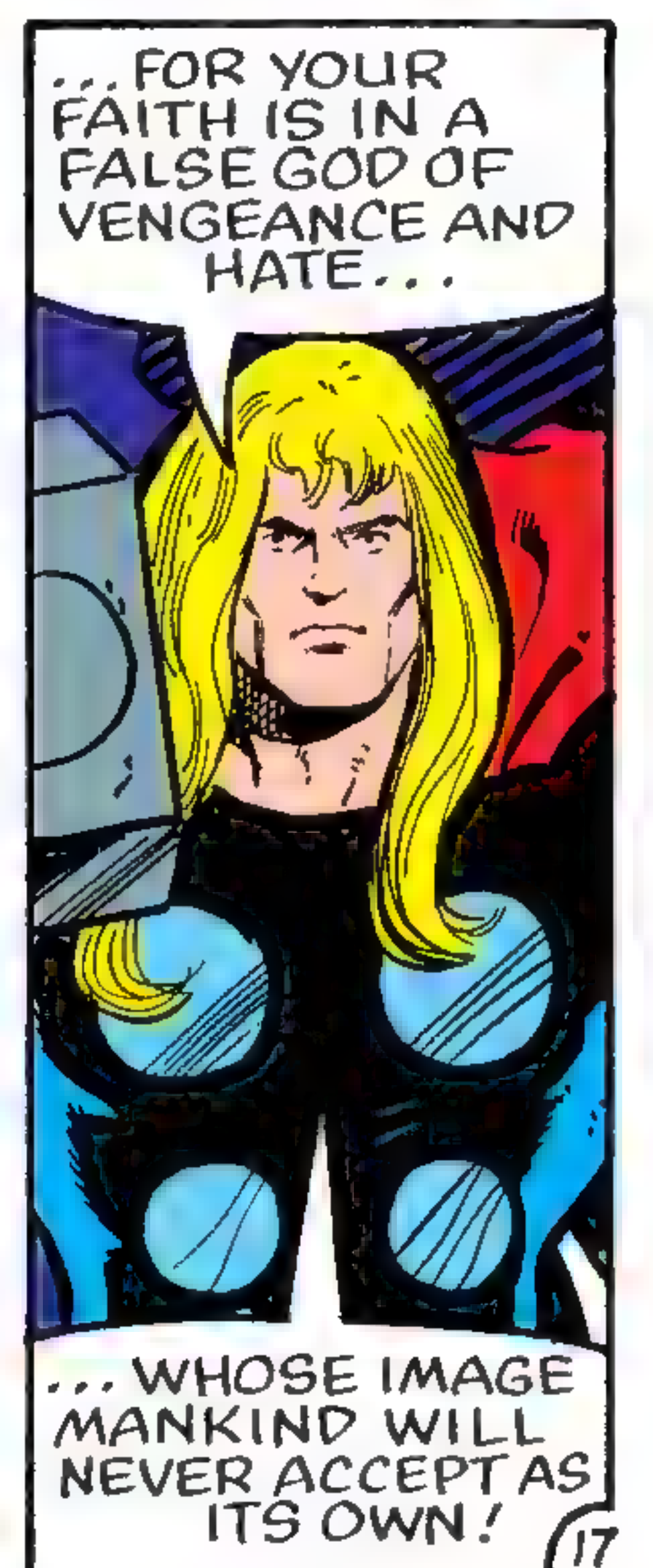
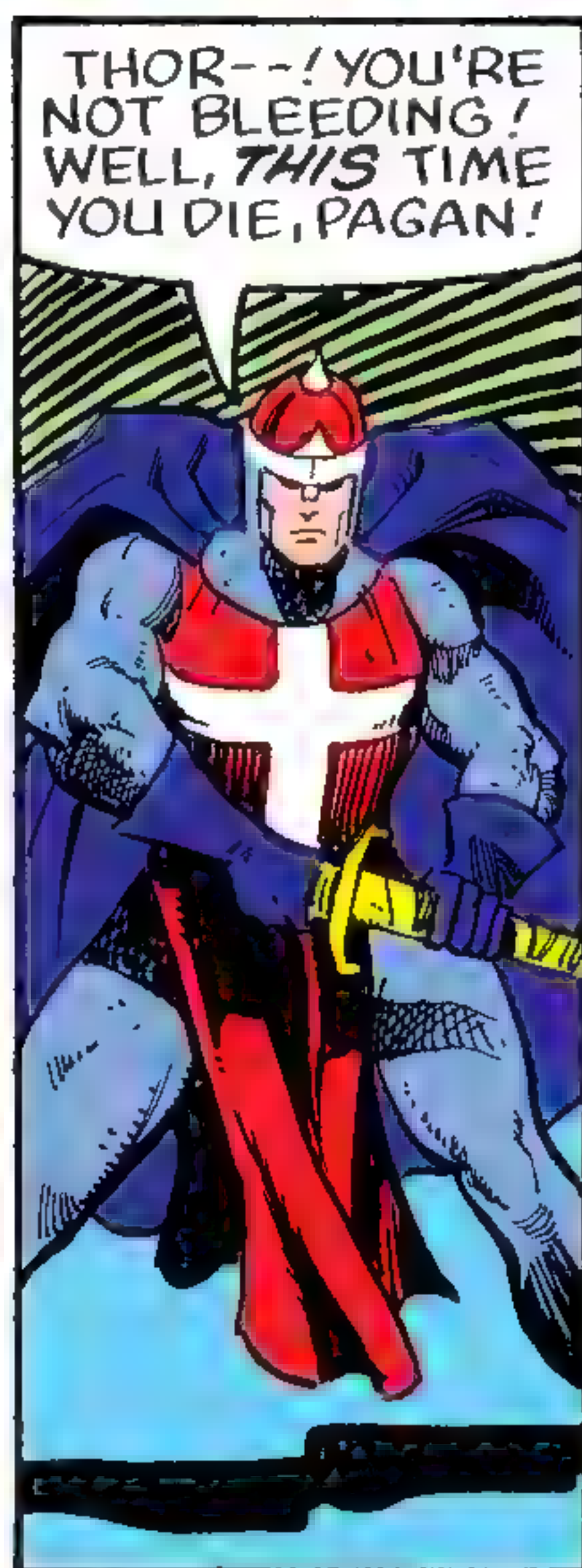
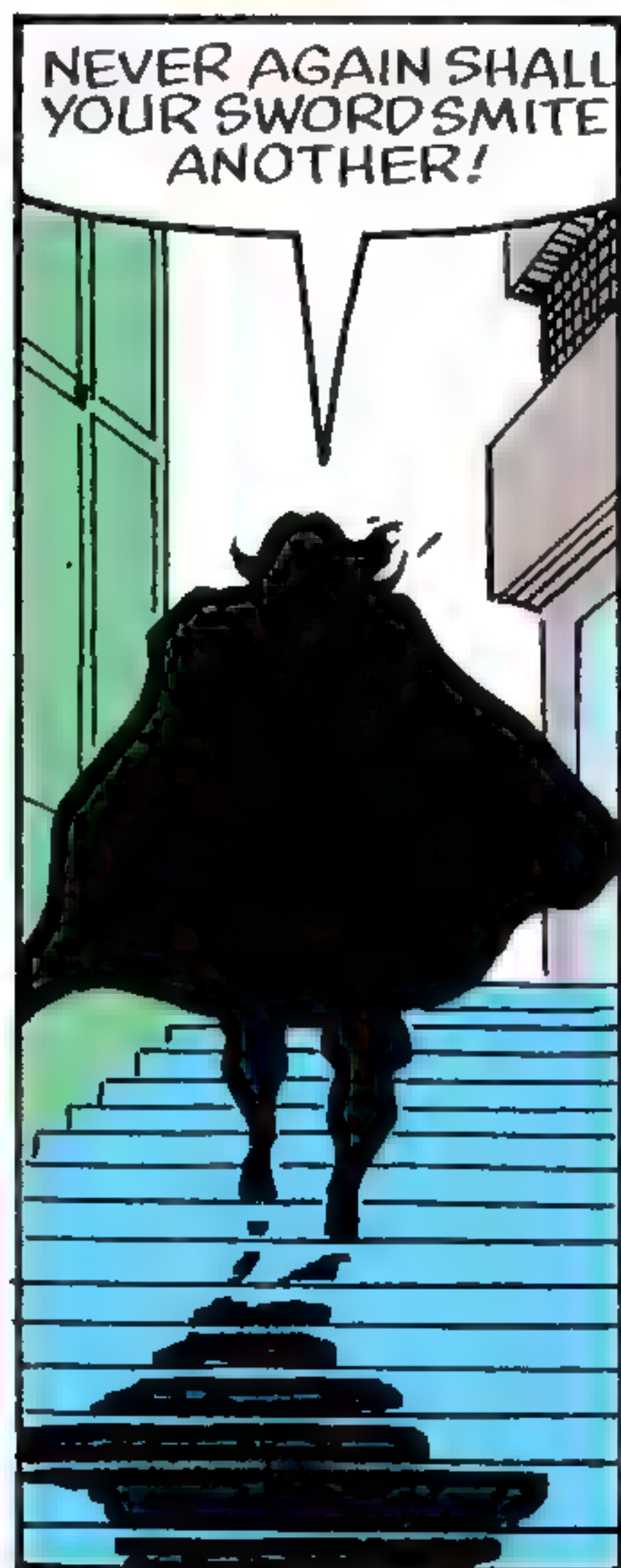
PLEASE, MISS, DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD BE TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL IF THIS CROWD BROKE UP JUST NOW. I'M SURE THOR WOULD WANT YOU TO AVOID ANY FURTHER...

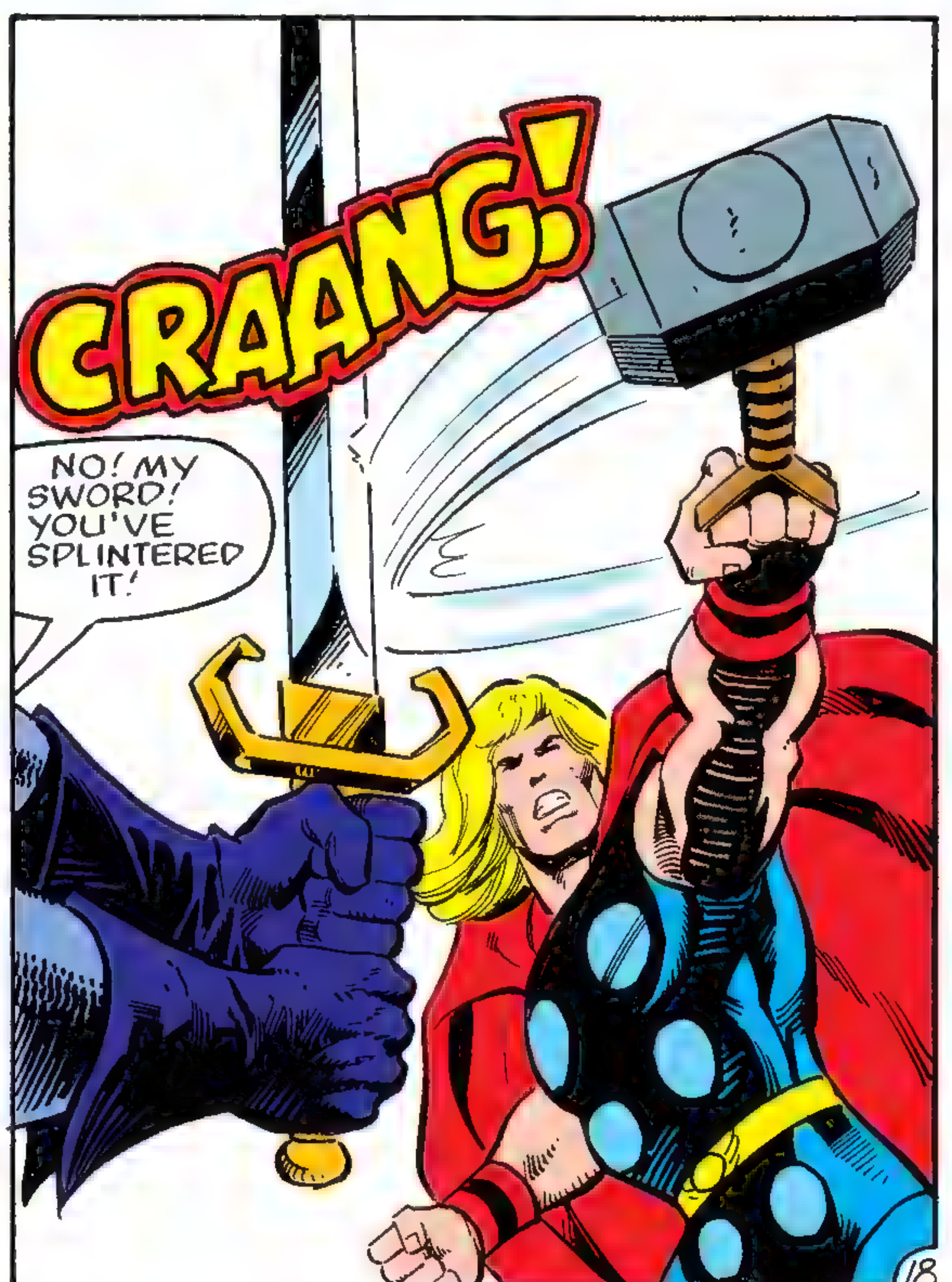
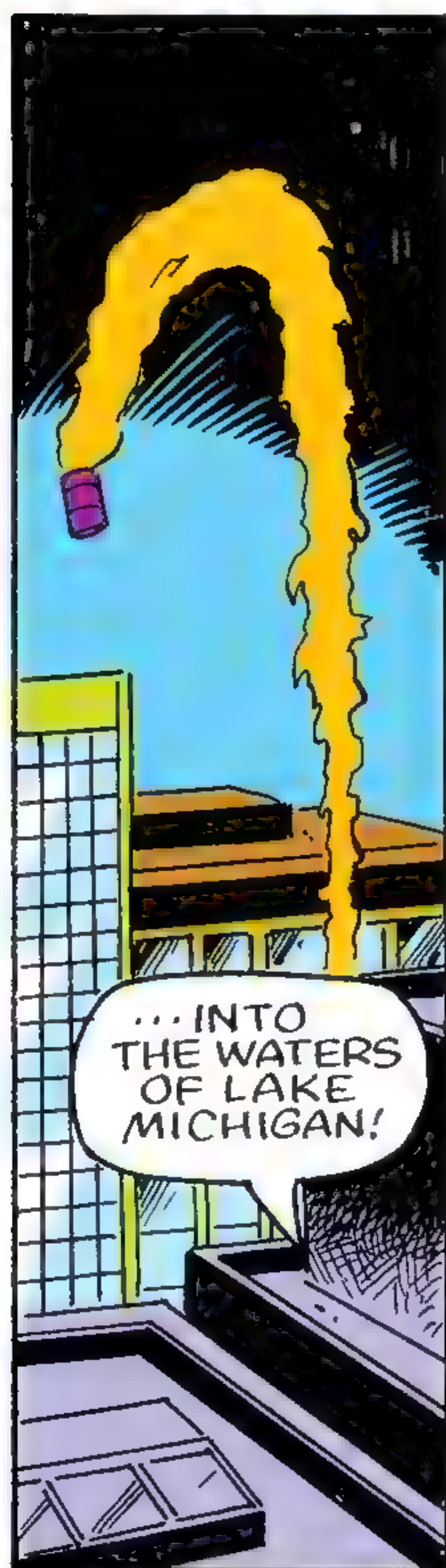
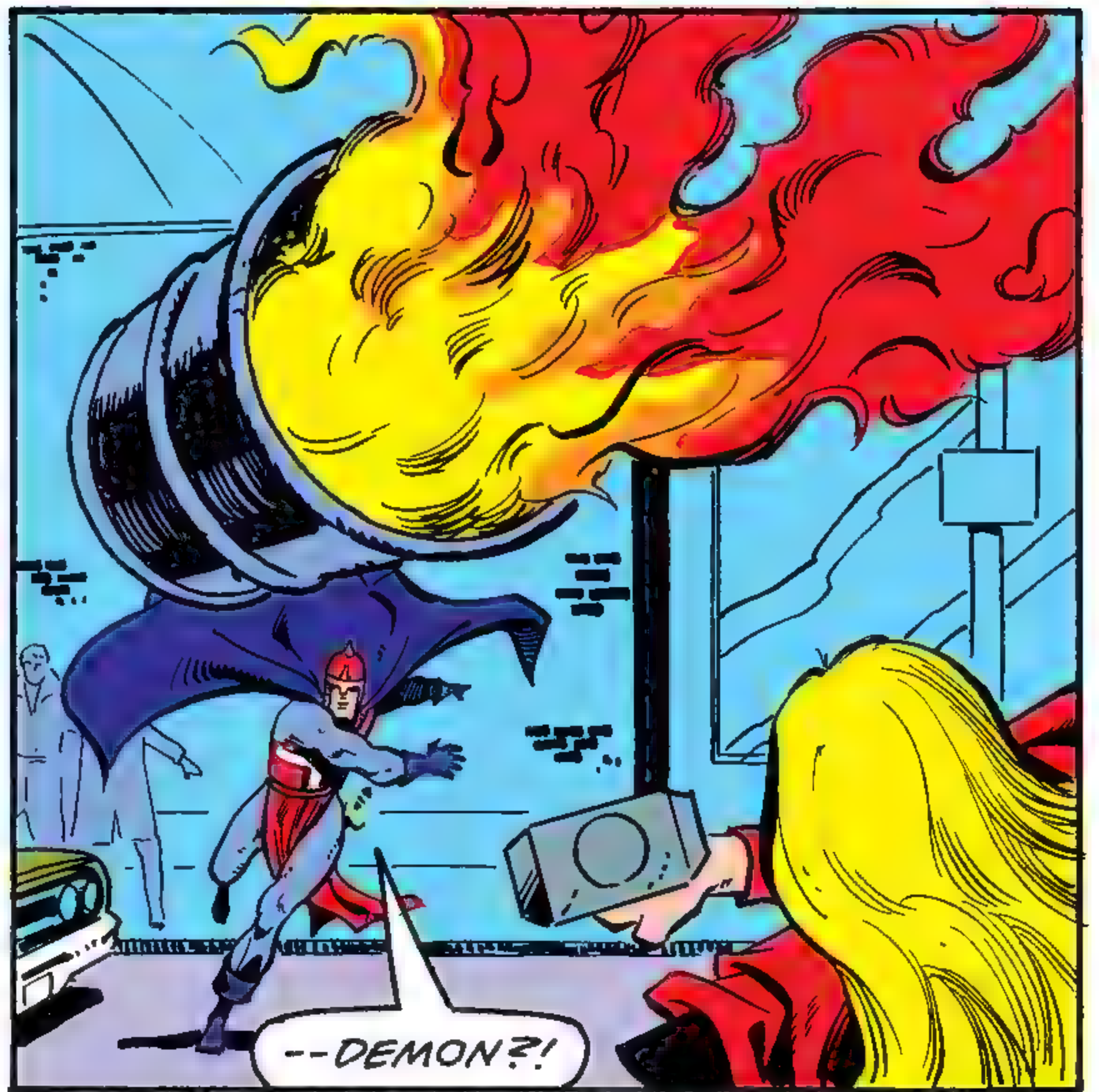
SACRILEGE!

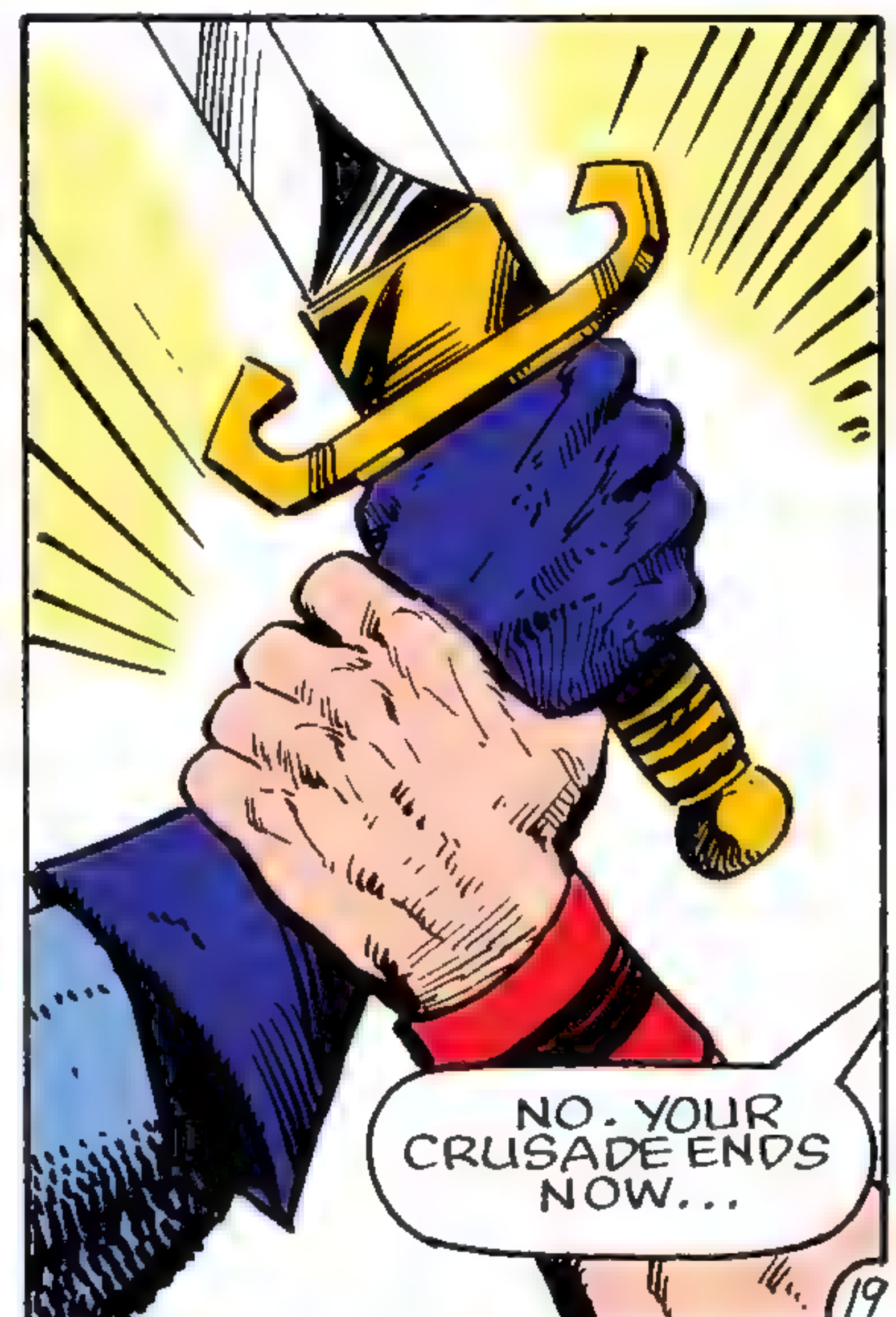
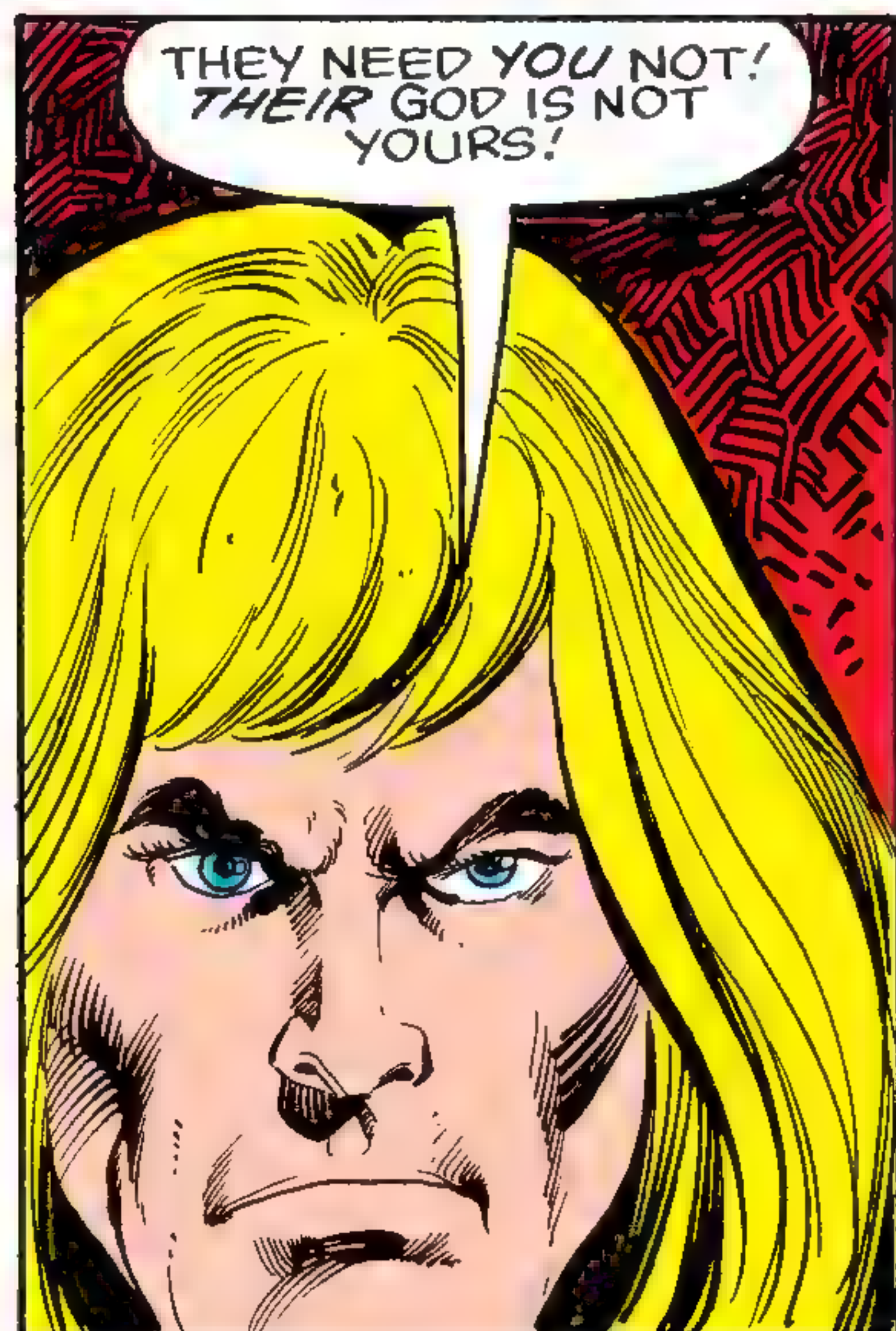
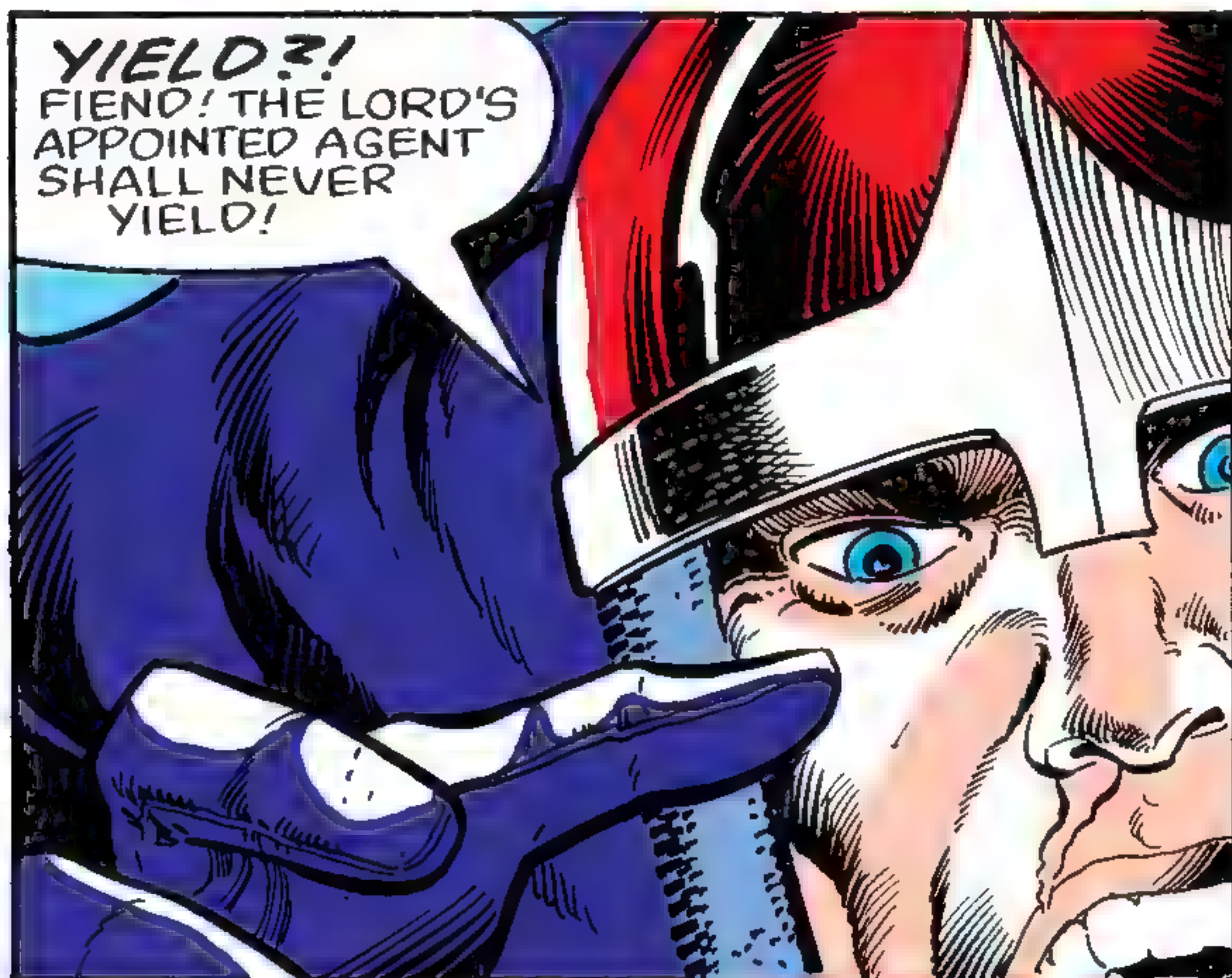
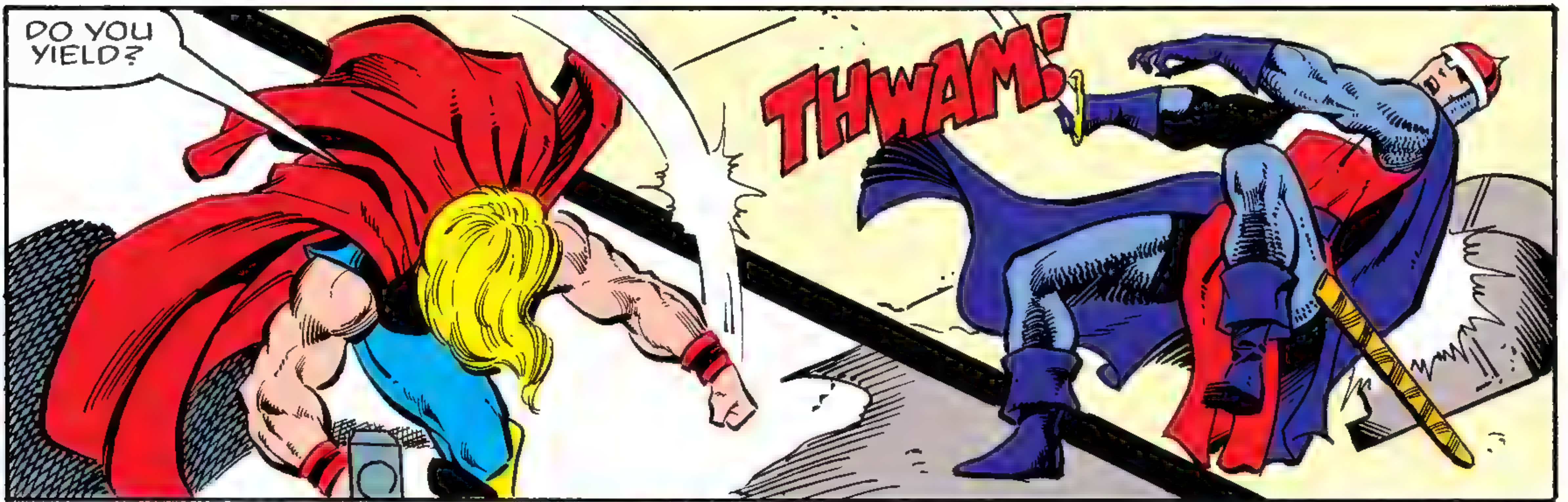
... CONFRONTATION. WHAT--!?

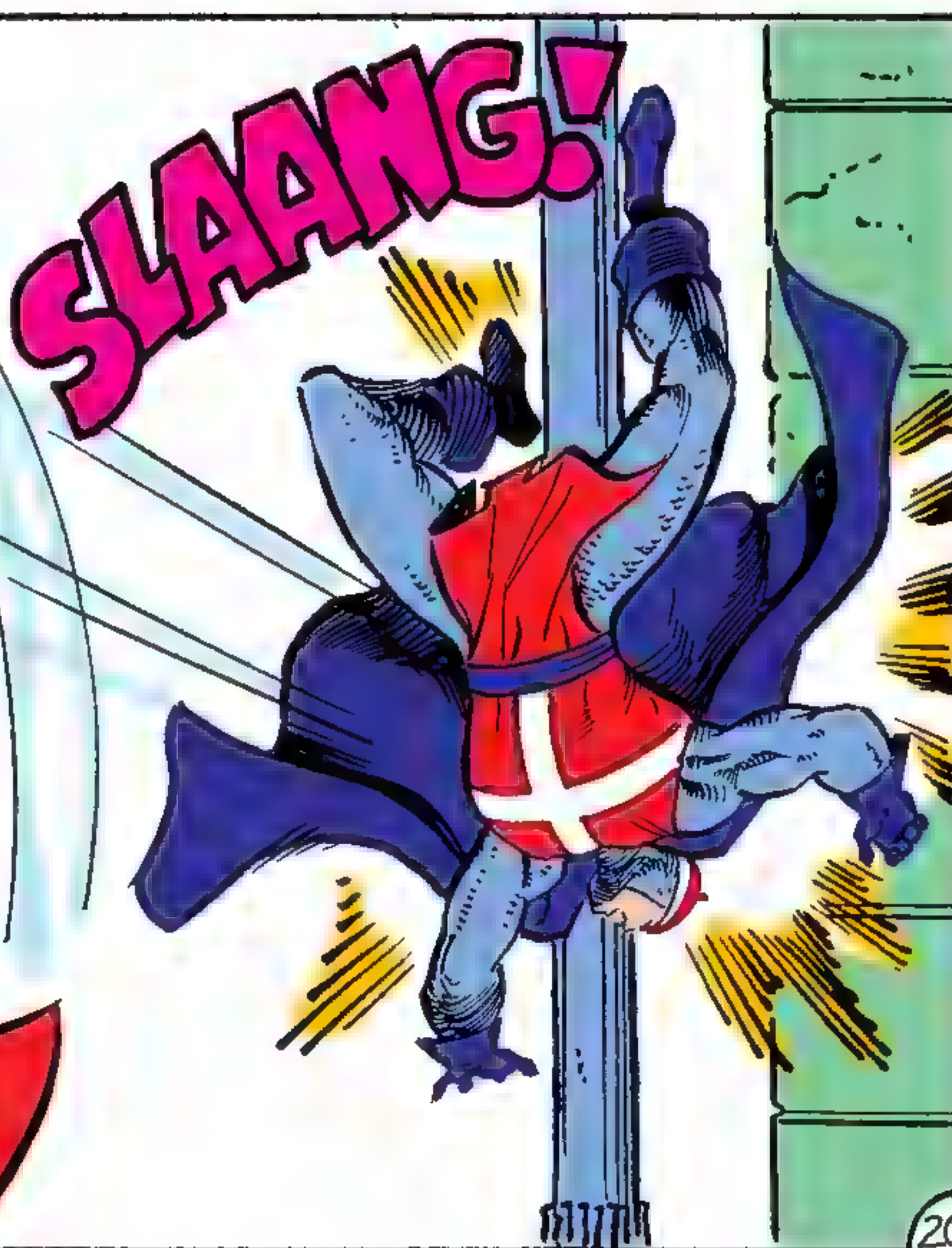
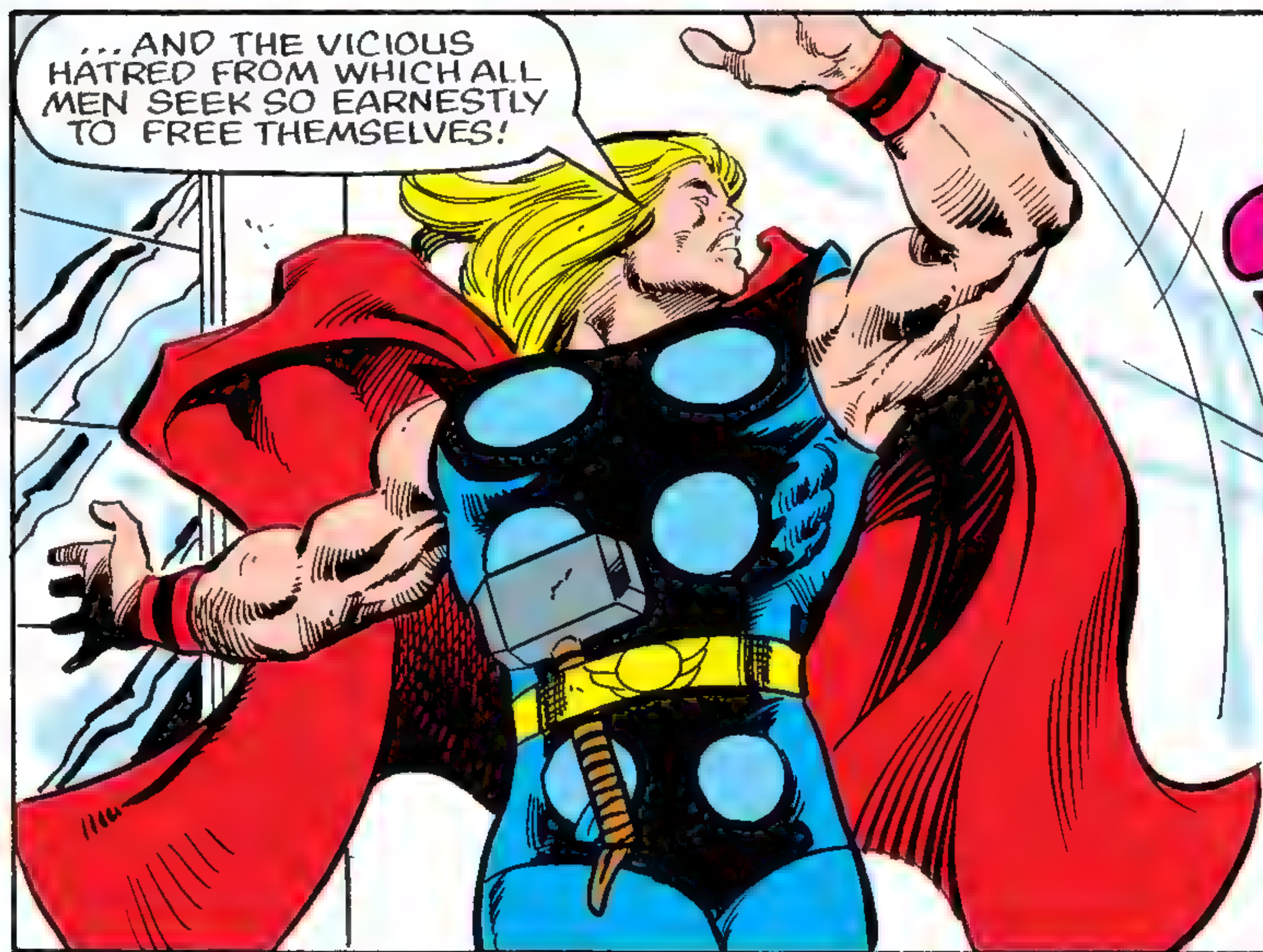
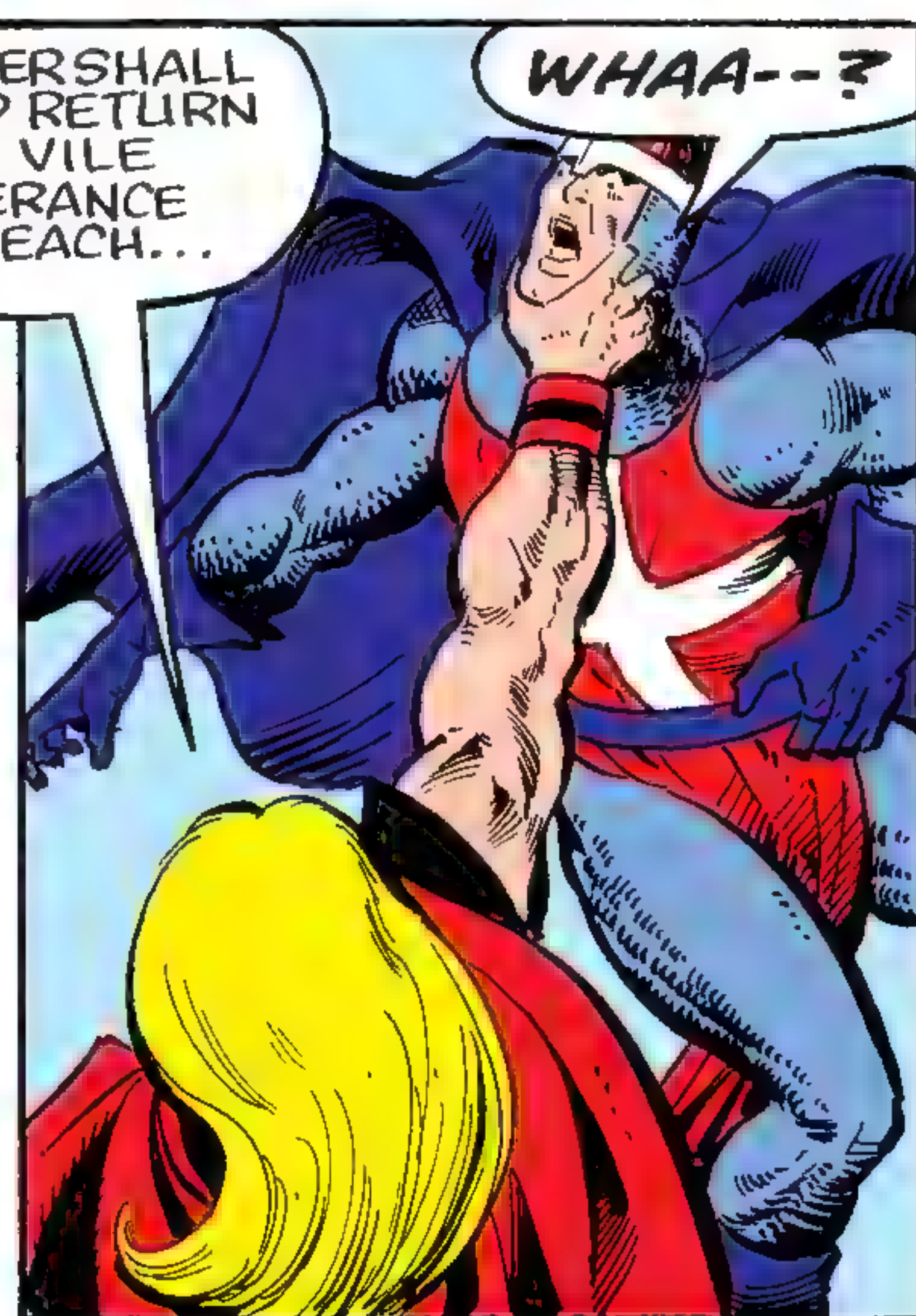
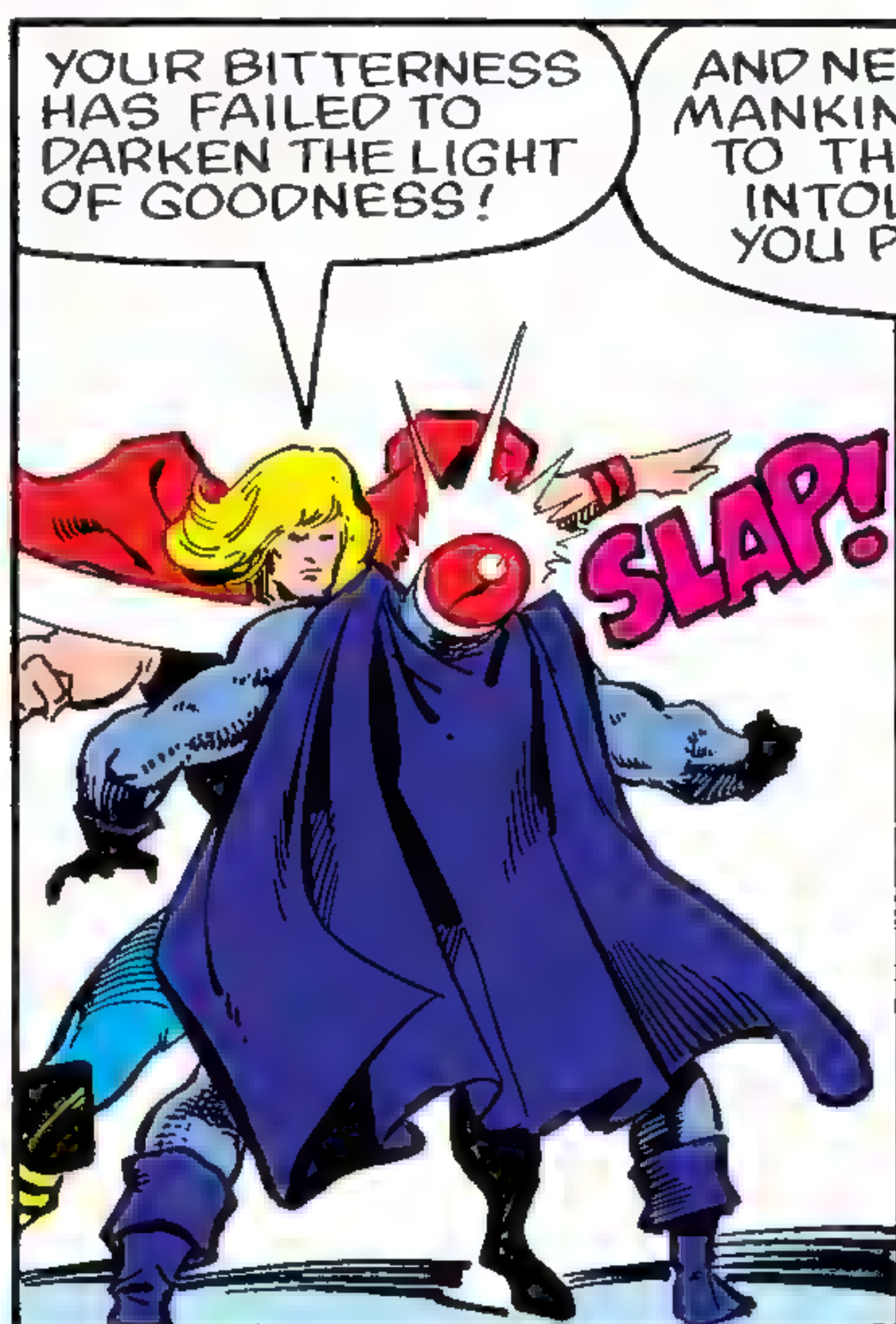
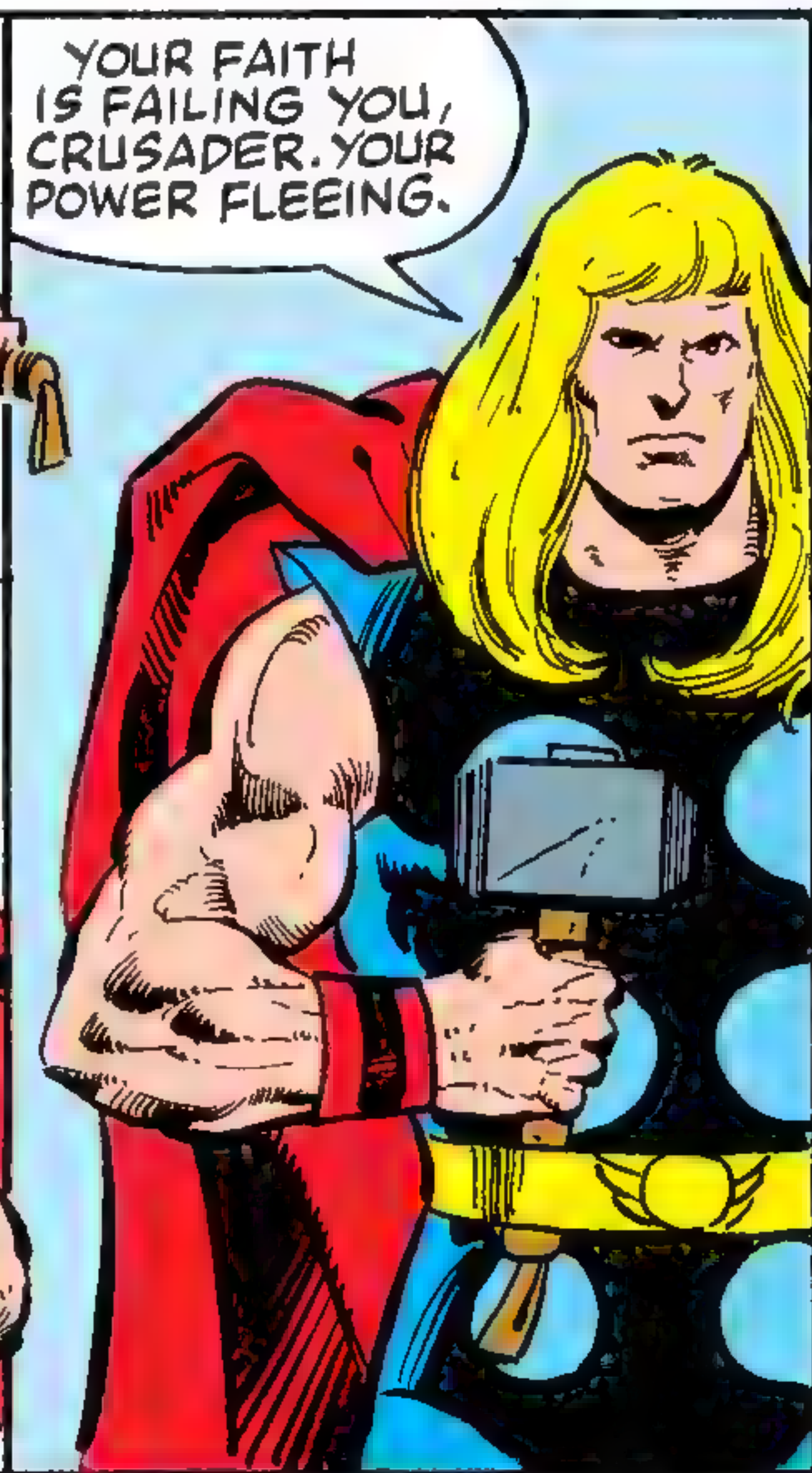
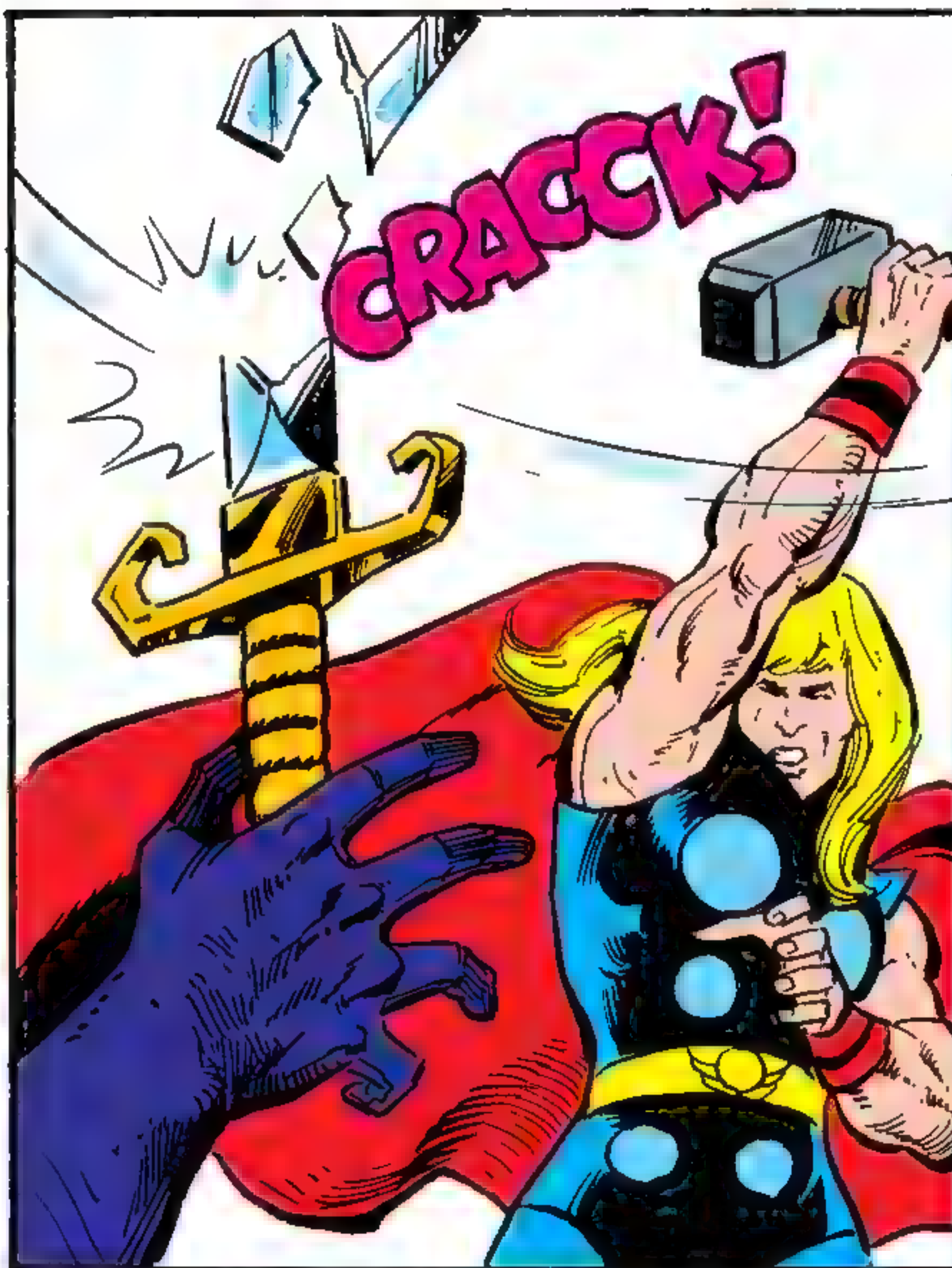
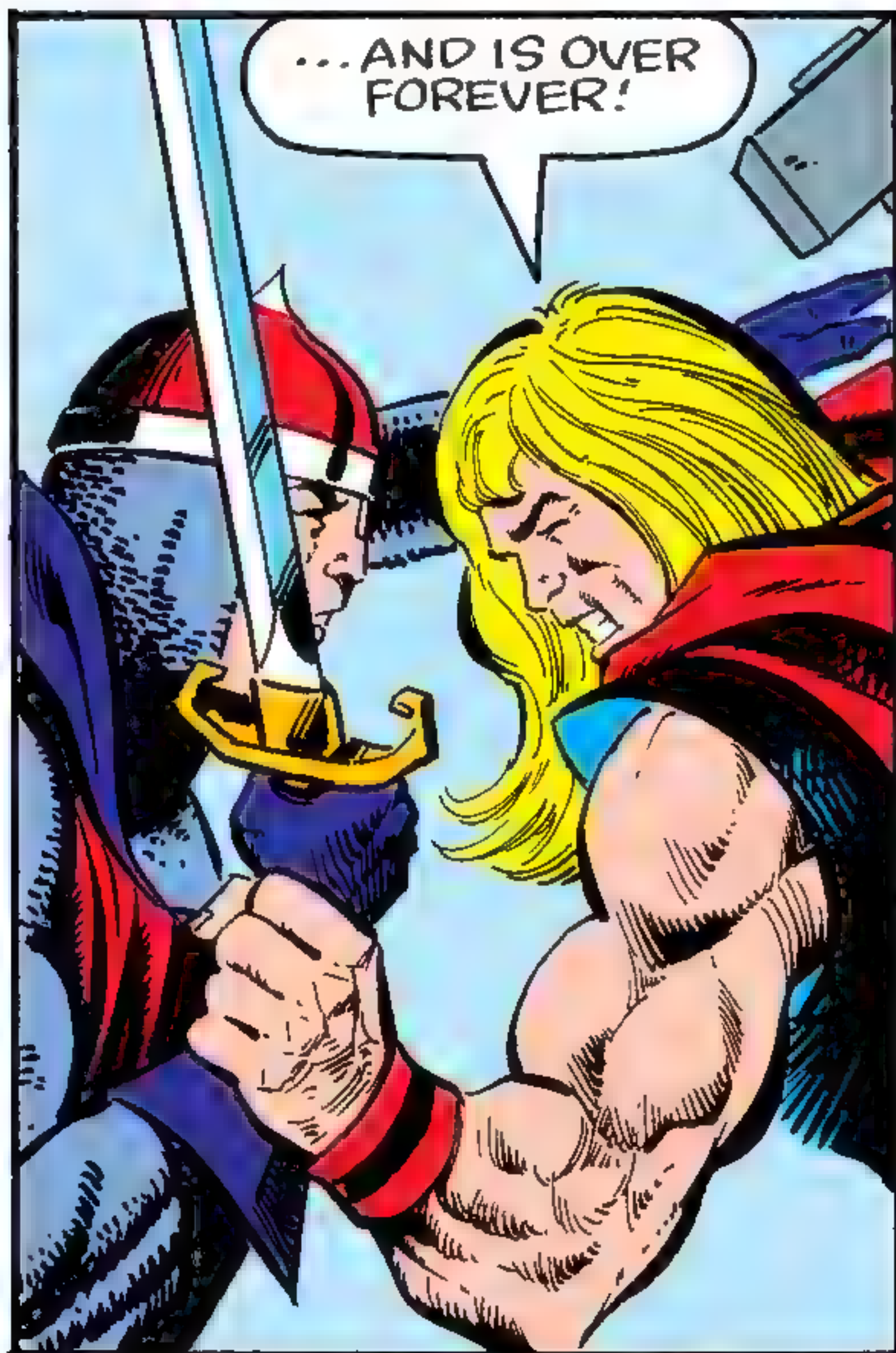
ABOMINATION!

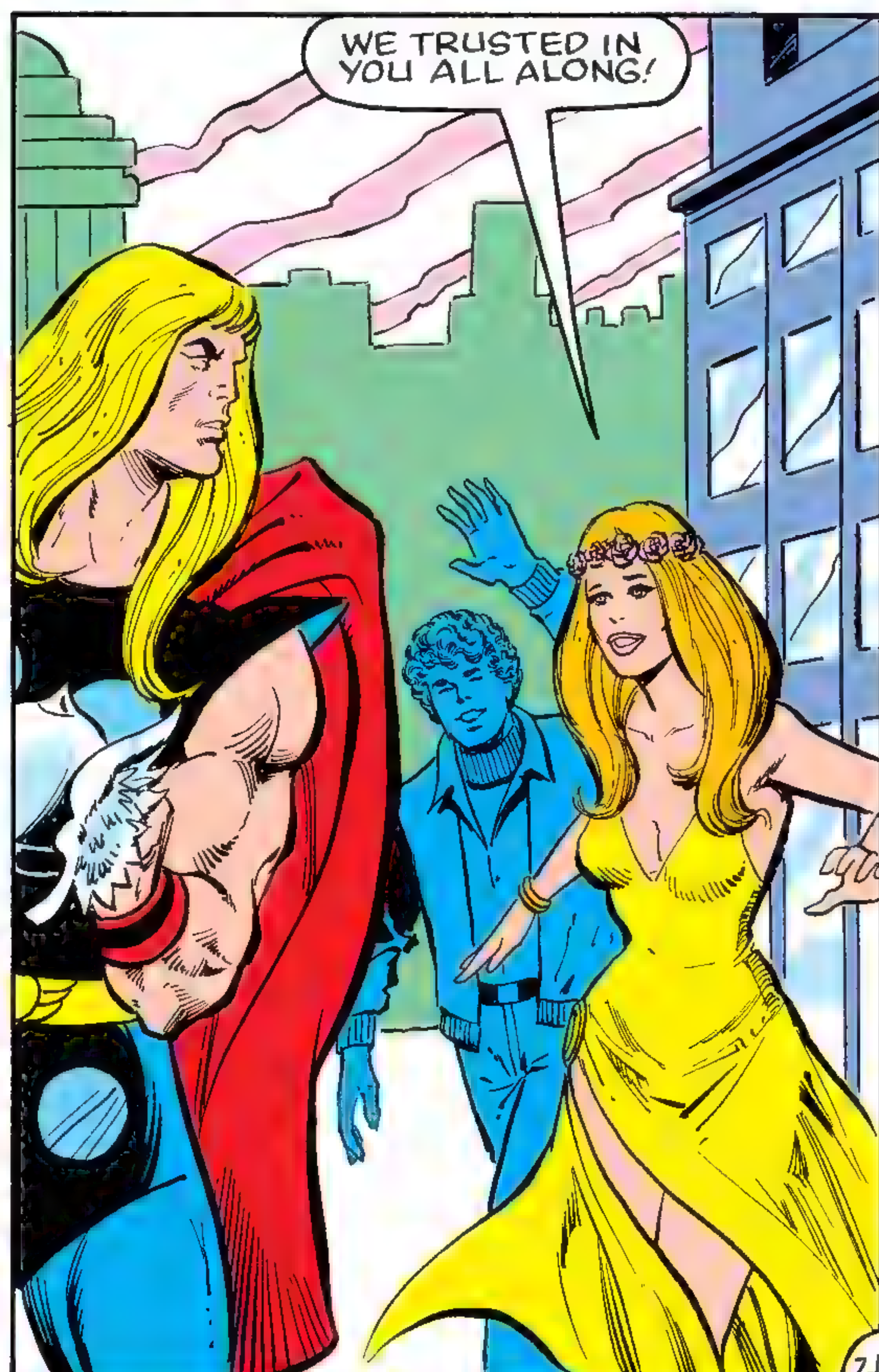
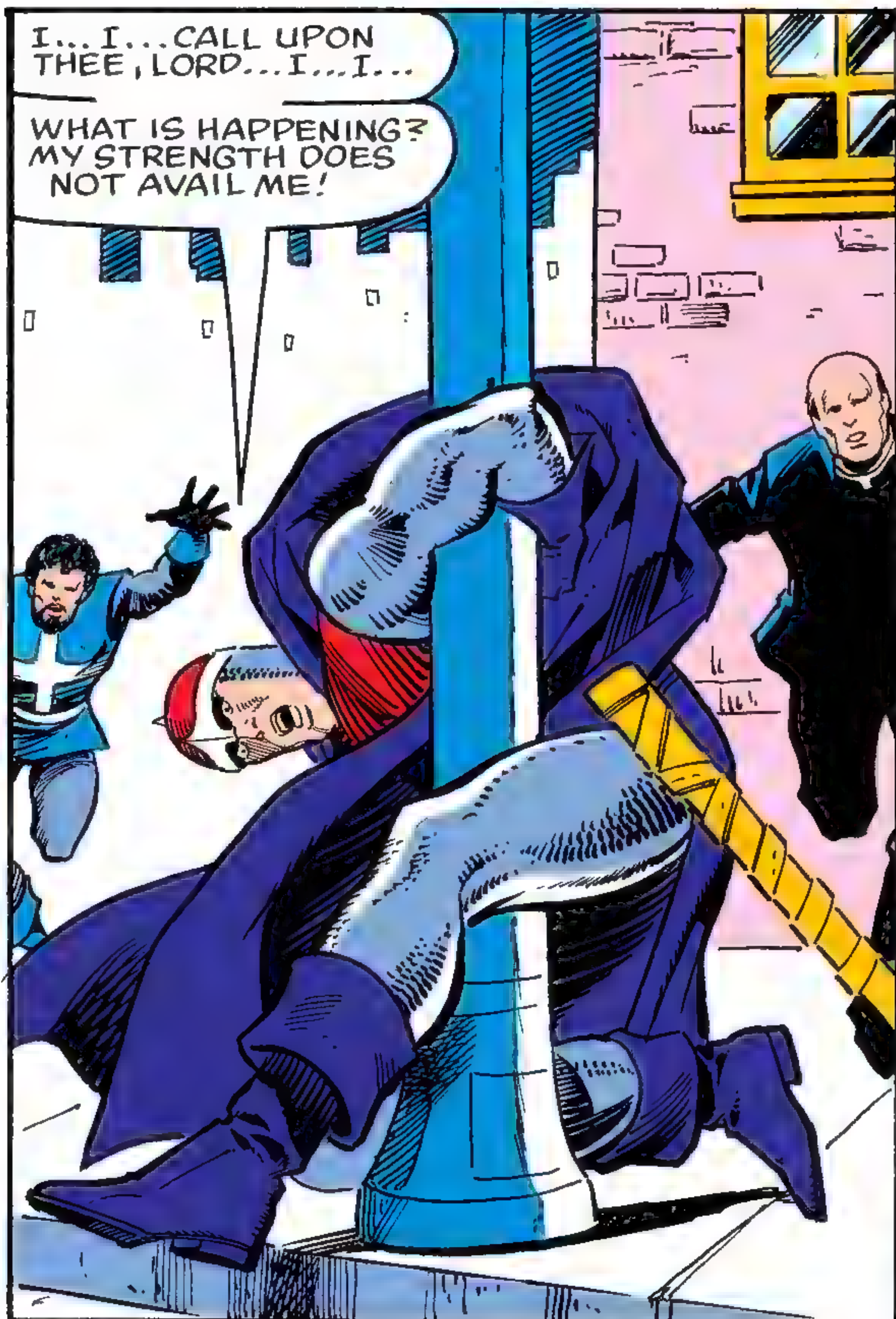
AND YOU, FALSE PRIEST, YOU CONSPIRE WITH THIS PAGAN WITCH AGAINST THE TRUE CHURCH! IT'S JUST AS I SUSPECTED!

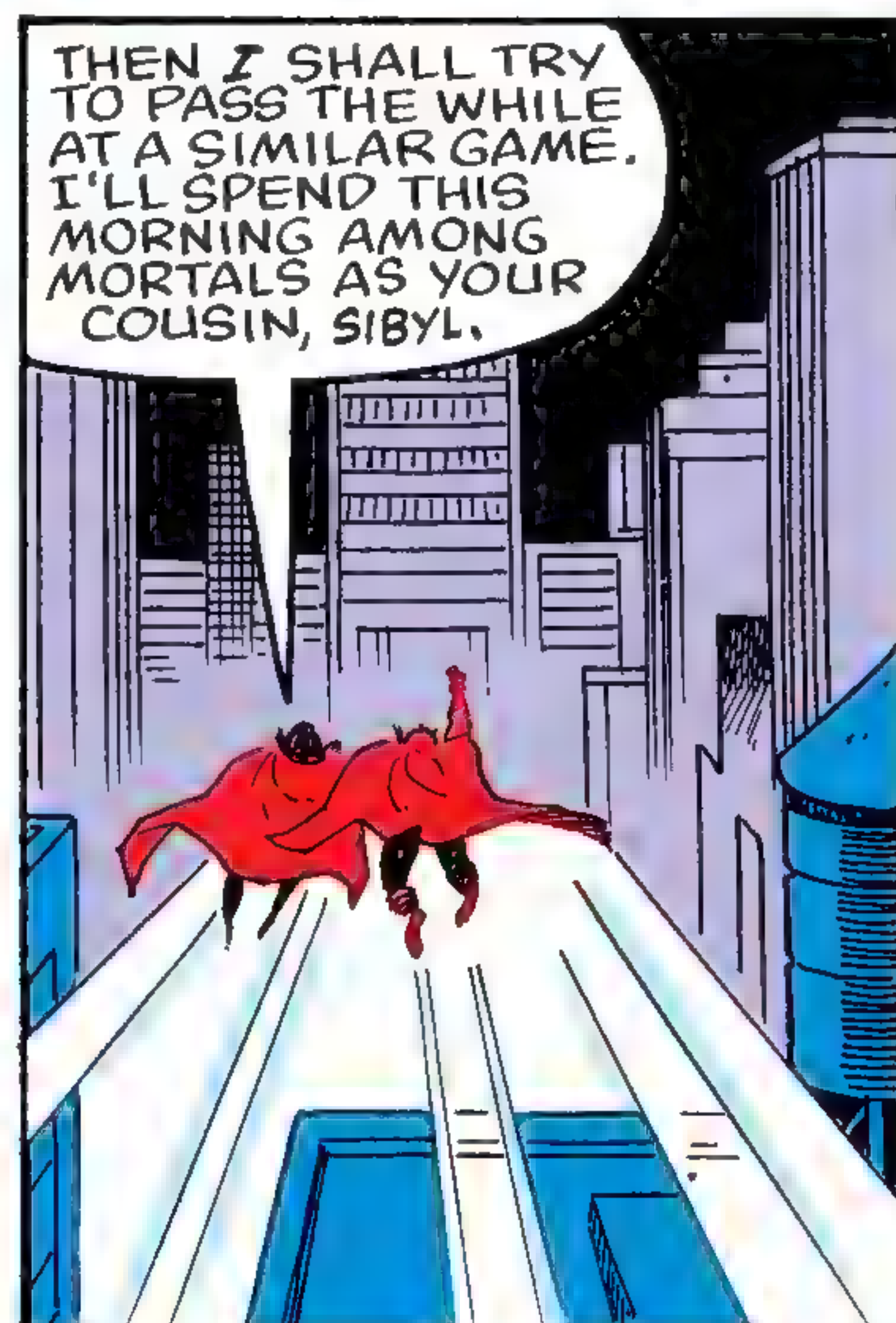
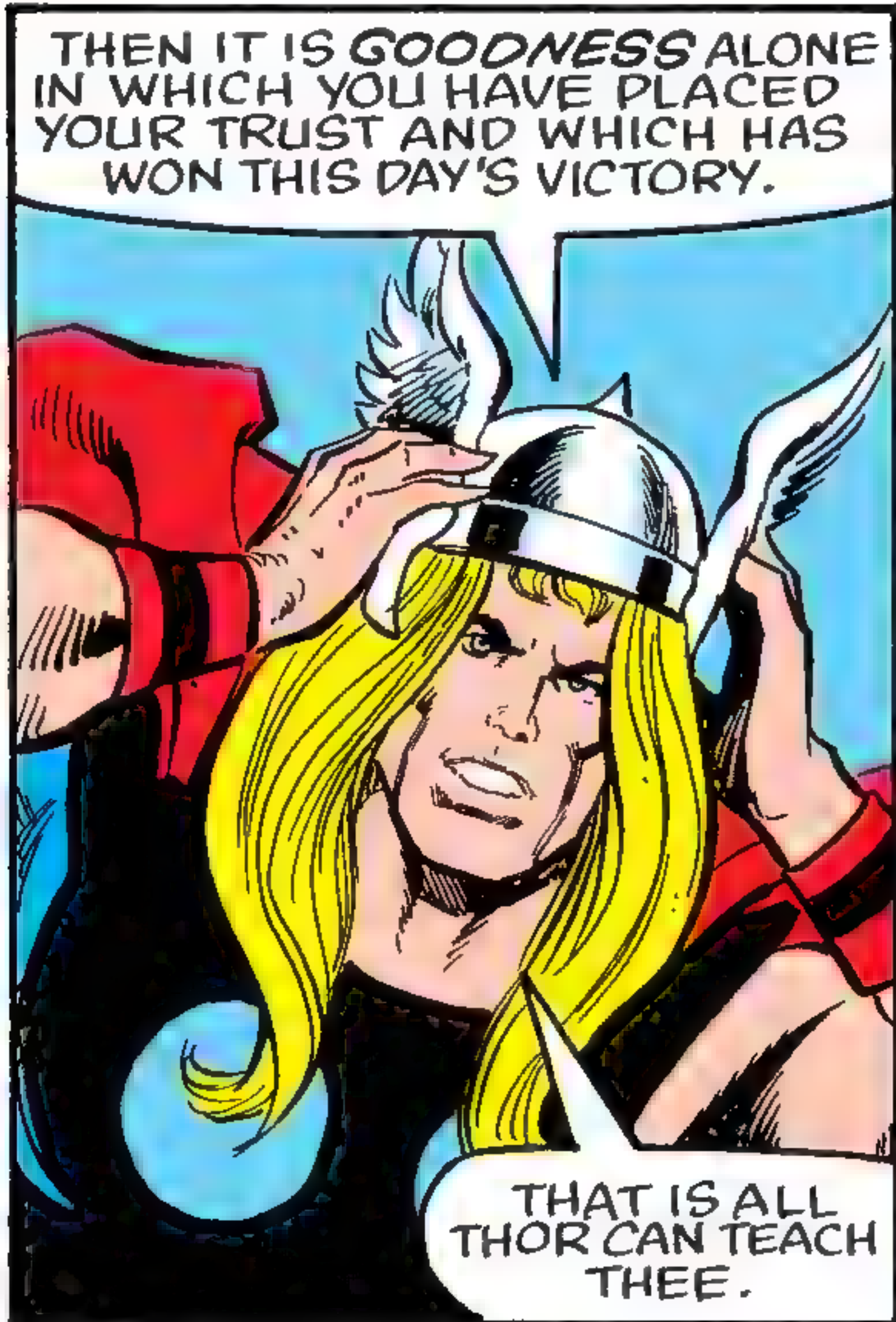












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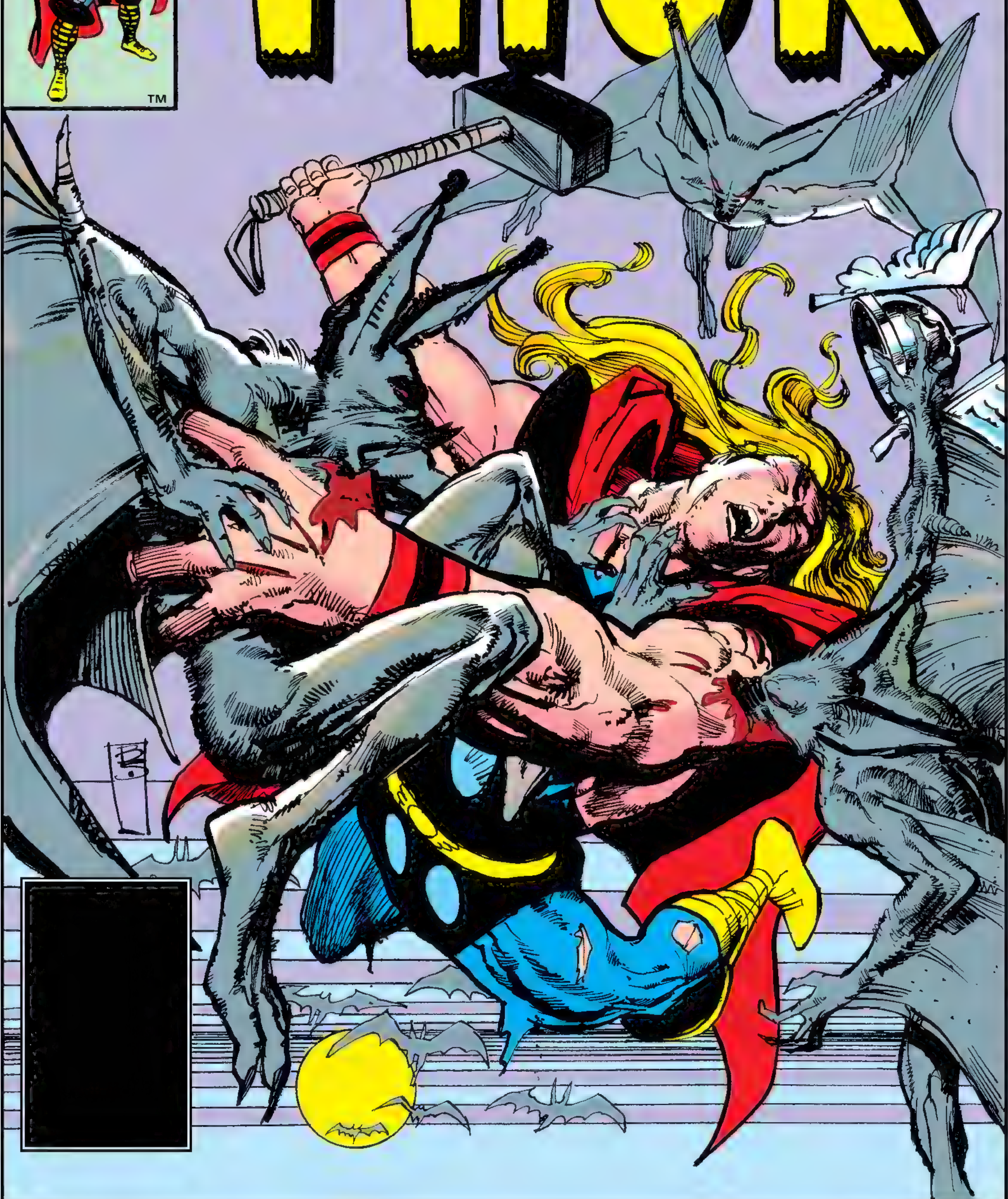


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THE
MIGHTY

THOR®



Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**®

BLOOD OF A GODDESS!

"LOOK, DOCTOR BLAKE, I KNOW ALL THIS HAPPENED SEVERAL YEARS AGO, BUT I'M A DETECTIVE AND IT'S MY JOB, SO LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T JOG YOUR MEMORY A LITTLE..."

"... BACK WHEN JANE FOSTER WAS A HOSPITAL NURSE, YOU AND SHE WERE A HOT ITEM, BUT THEN THE TWO OF YOU CALLED IT SPLITS, OKAY?..."

"... SOME TIME PASSES. ONE DAY YOU MEET HER, TRY TO FAN THE OLD FLAMES, BUT SHE SAYS SHE'S IN LOVE WITH HER NEW BOSS, KEITH KINCAID, ALSO A DOCTOR. SO FAR IT'S POSSIBLE, RIGHT?"

"... NOW YOU'RE A LITTLE... UH... PEEVED. A LITTLE JEALOUS MAYBE. VOICES RISE. THREATS GET MADE. YOU PULL OUT A GUN--LOOK, MAYBE YOU DIDN'T REALLY MEAN IT--POINT BLANK RANGE YOU SQUEEZE OFF A COUPLE OF ROUNDS. BANG! JANE FOSTER'S GONNA LOVE *NOBODY*..."



ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPTER

DON PERLIN
PENCILER

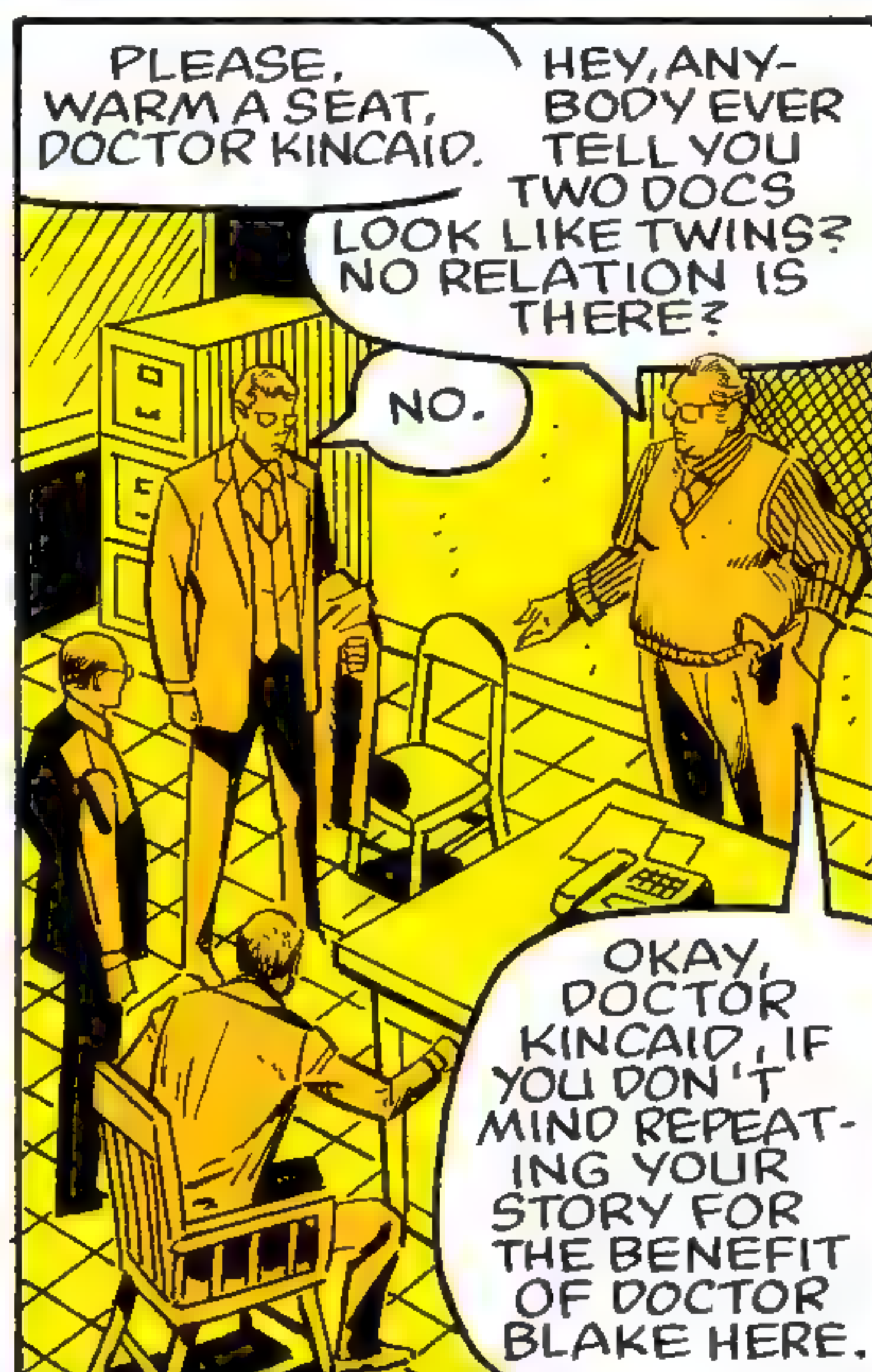
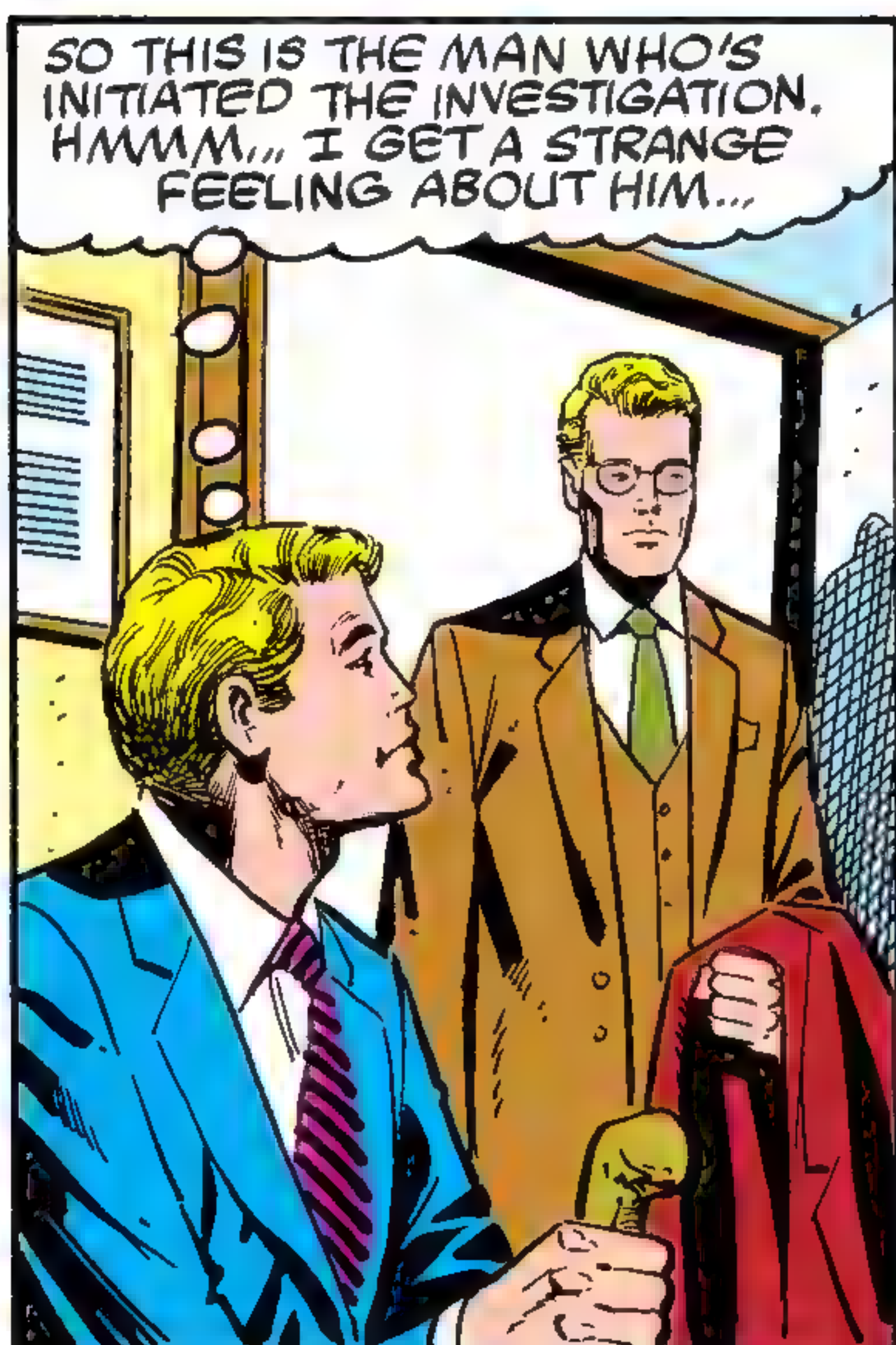
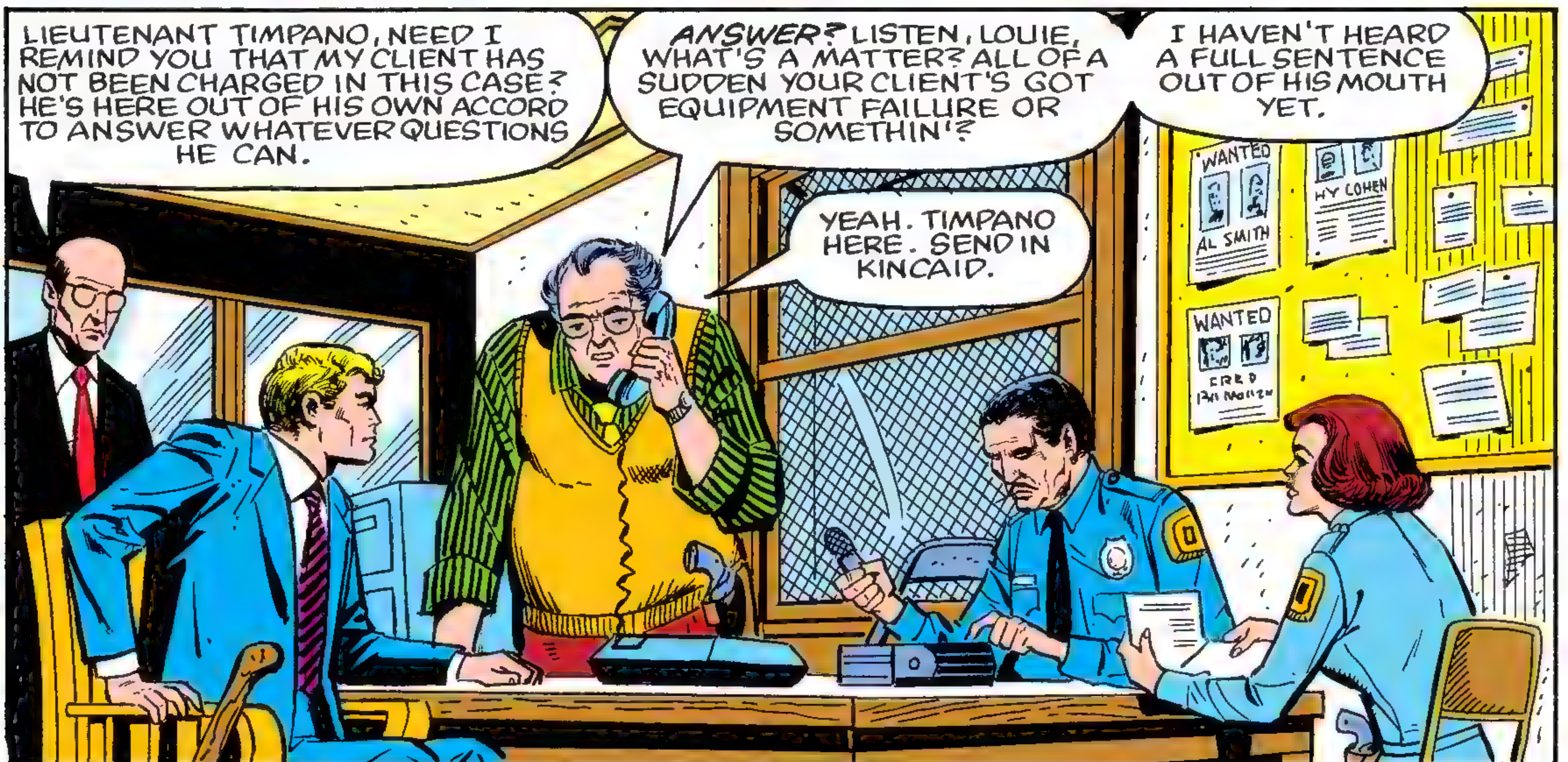
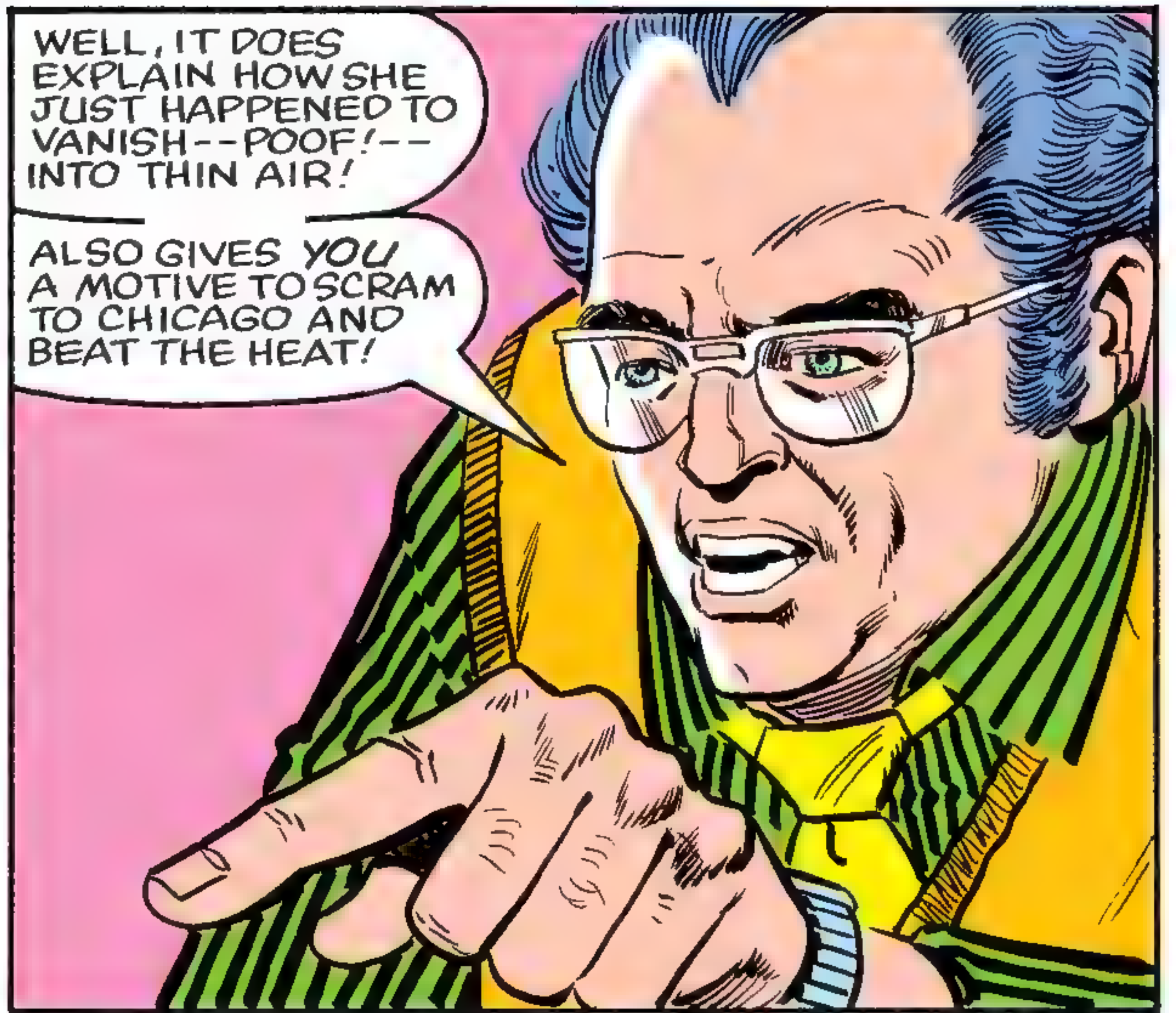
VINCE COLLETTA
INKER

JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER

GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF



"ONE DAY, WHILE I WAS OUT OF TOWN ON BUSINESS, JANE SUDDENLY TOOK ILL AND WAS HOSPITALIZED.* WHEN I GOT BACK SHE WAS GONE. I COULDN'T FIND ANY TRACE OF HER AFTER THAT ..."



* THOR # 231.

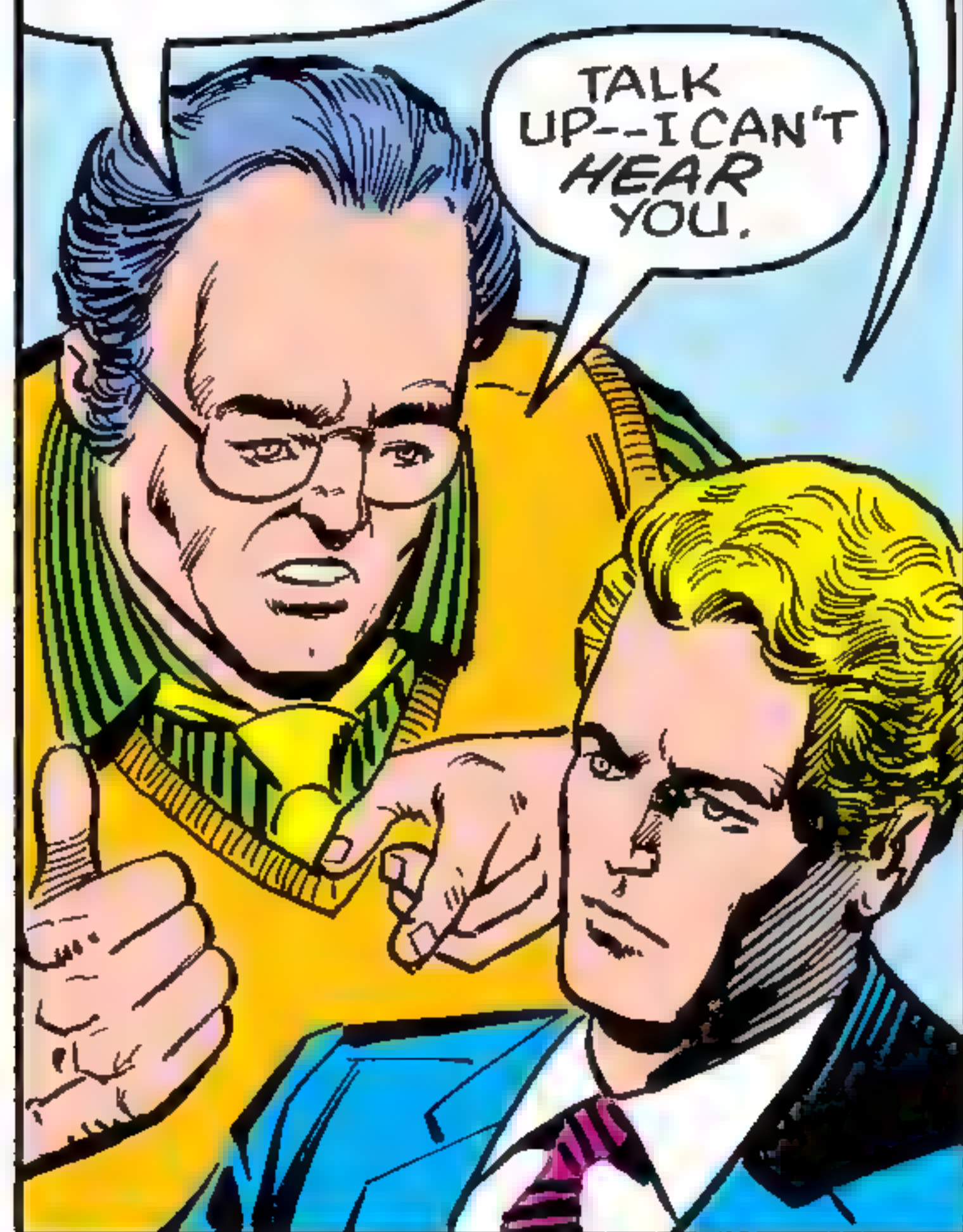
"... THOUGH PRIVATE DETECTIVES WHOM I'VE HAD ON THE CASE EVER SINCE HAVE FOUND SEVERAL WITNESSES WHO SWEAR THAT JANE WAS LAST SEEN WITH DONALD BLAKE... HER FORMER... EMPLOYER."



THAT'S YOU, HANDSOME. NOW WHAT'VE YOU GOT TO SAY?

NOTHING.

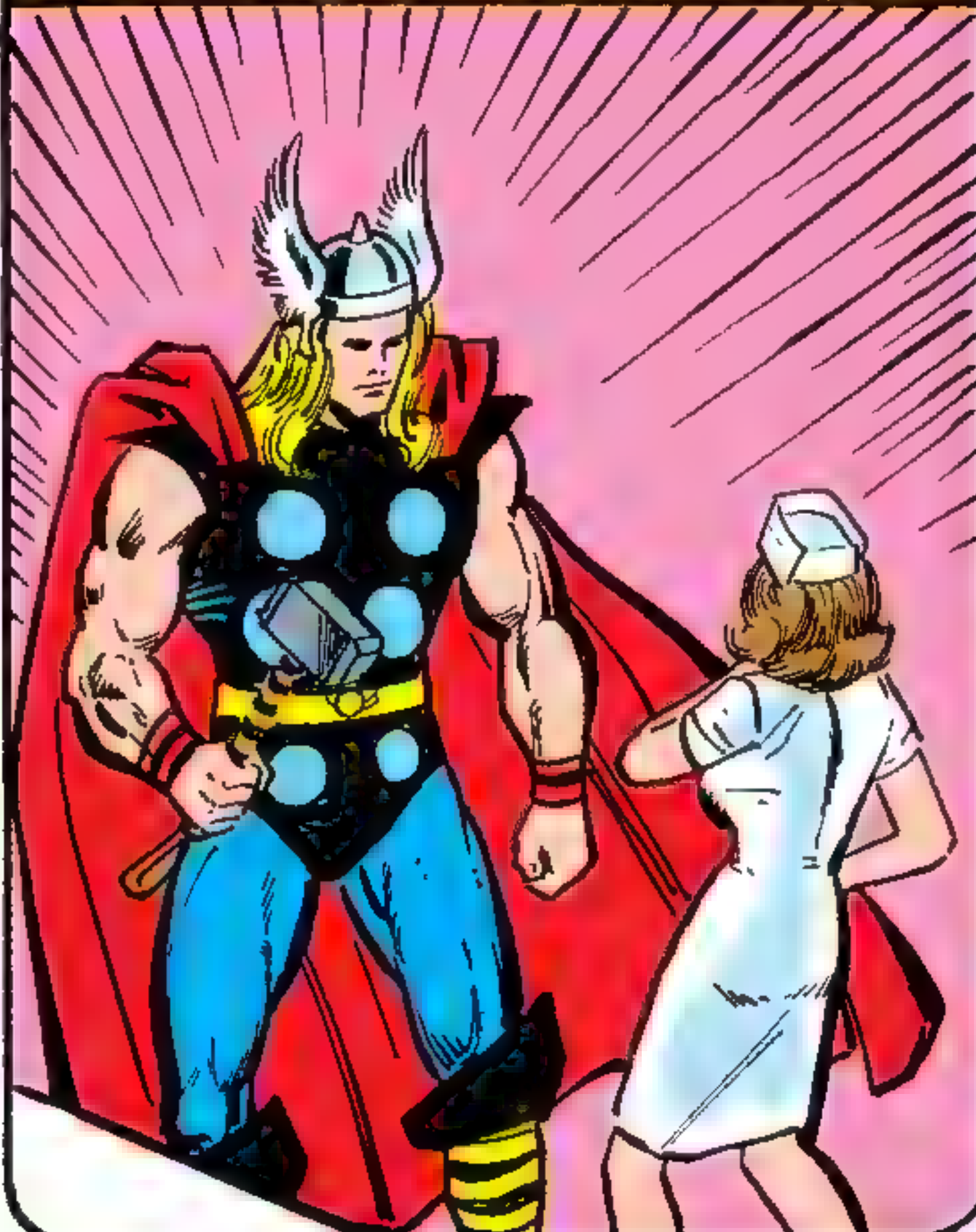
TALK UP--I CAN'T HEAR YOU.



HOW CAN I TELL THE TRUTH? JANE FOSTER AND I WERE INDEED IN LOVE ONCE...

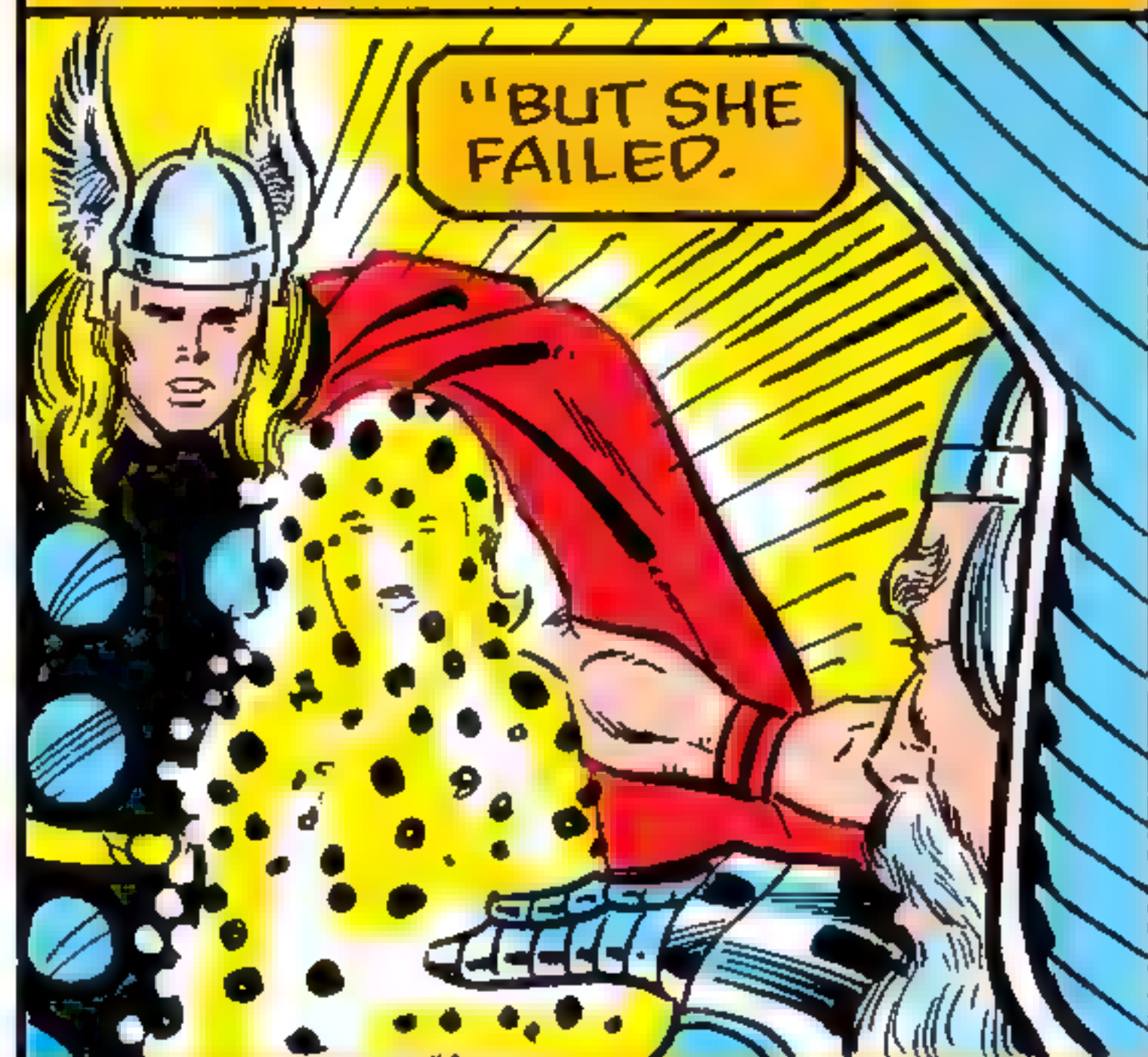


"... SO MUCH SO THAT I REVEALED MYSELF TO HER IN MY TRUE IDENTITY OF THOR, IMMORTAL GOD OF THUNDER."



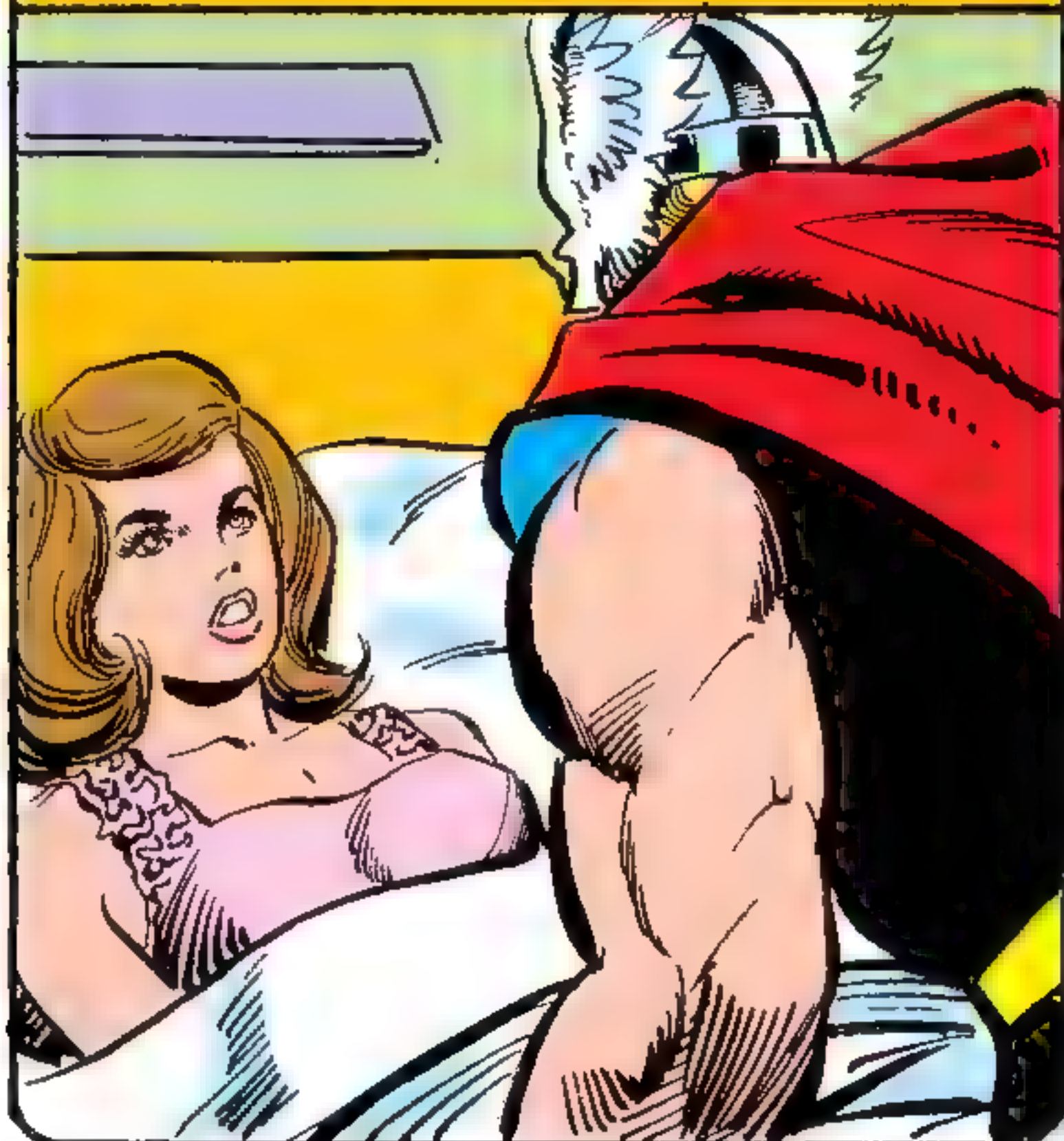
"AFTER MUCH PLEADING, I PREVAILED UPON MY FATHER ODIN TO GRANT JANE IMMORTALITY. HE POSED HER A TEST..."

"BUT SHE FAILED."



"ODIN BANISHED HER FROM ASGARD AND SENT HER TO WORK FOR KINCAID, HAVING NO RECOLLECTION OF HER LOVE FOR DONALD BLAKE."

"BUT WHEN SHE FELL ILL ONE DAY AND LAY CLOSE TO DEATH, SHE CALLED FOR ME IN HER DELIRIUM. THOUGH I WAS IN LOVE WITH THE GODDESS SIF, MY FEELINGS FOR JANE WERE REKINDLED. STILL, I COULD DO NOTHING TO HEAL HER."



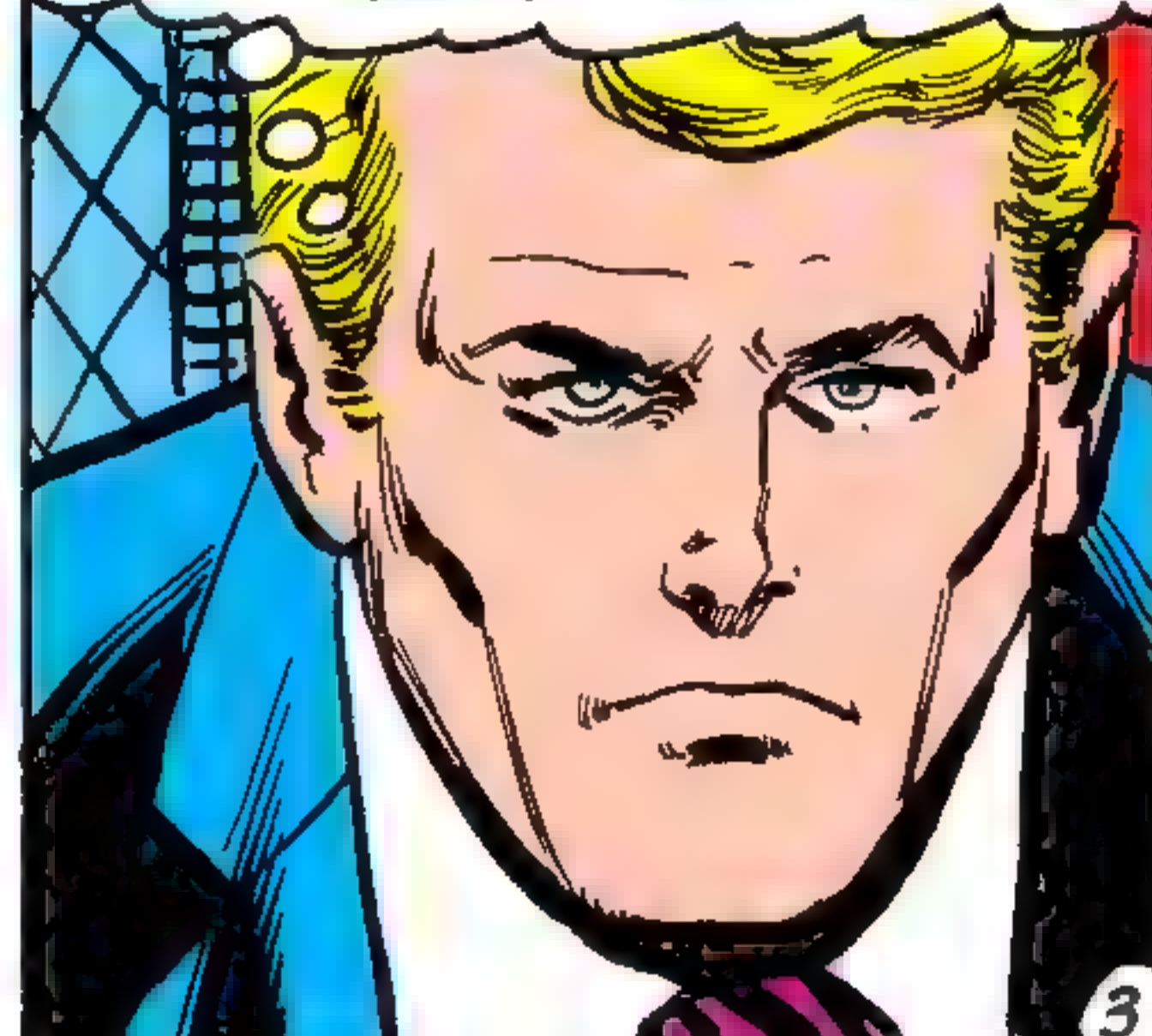
"THE GODDESS SIF, HOWEVER, WHOSE LOVE FOR THOR WAS GREATER EVEN THAN HIS FOR JANE FOSTER, STOLE THE ENCHANTED RUNESTAFF OF KAMO THARNN..."

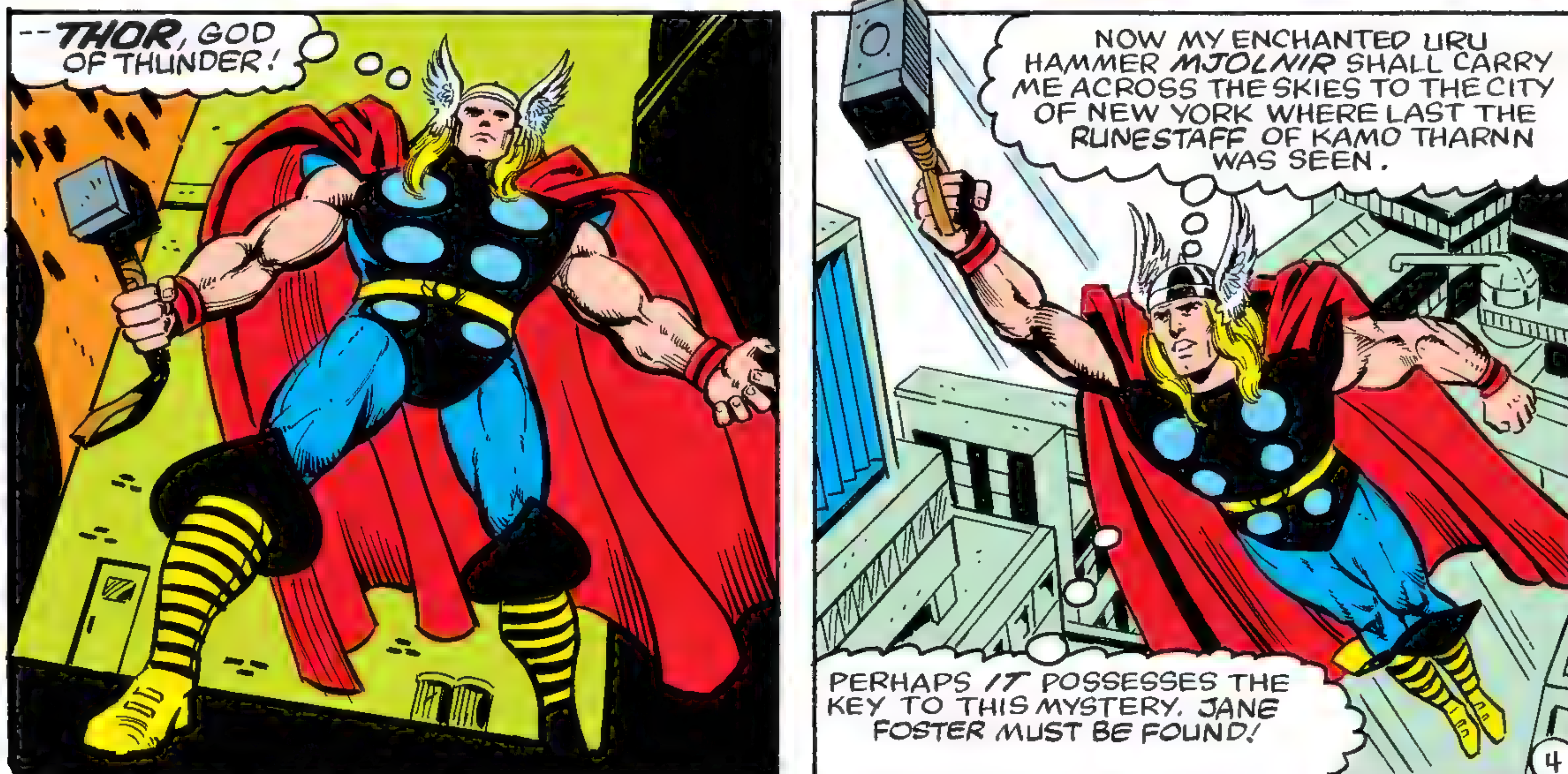
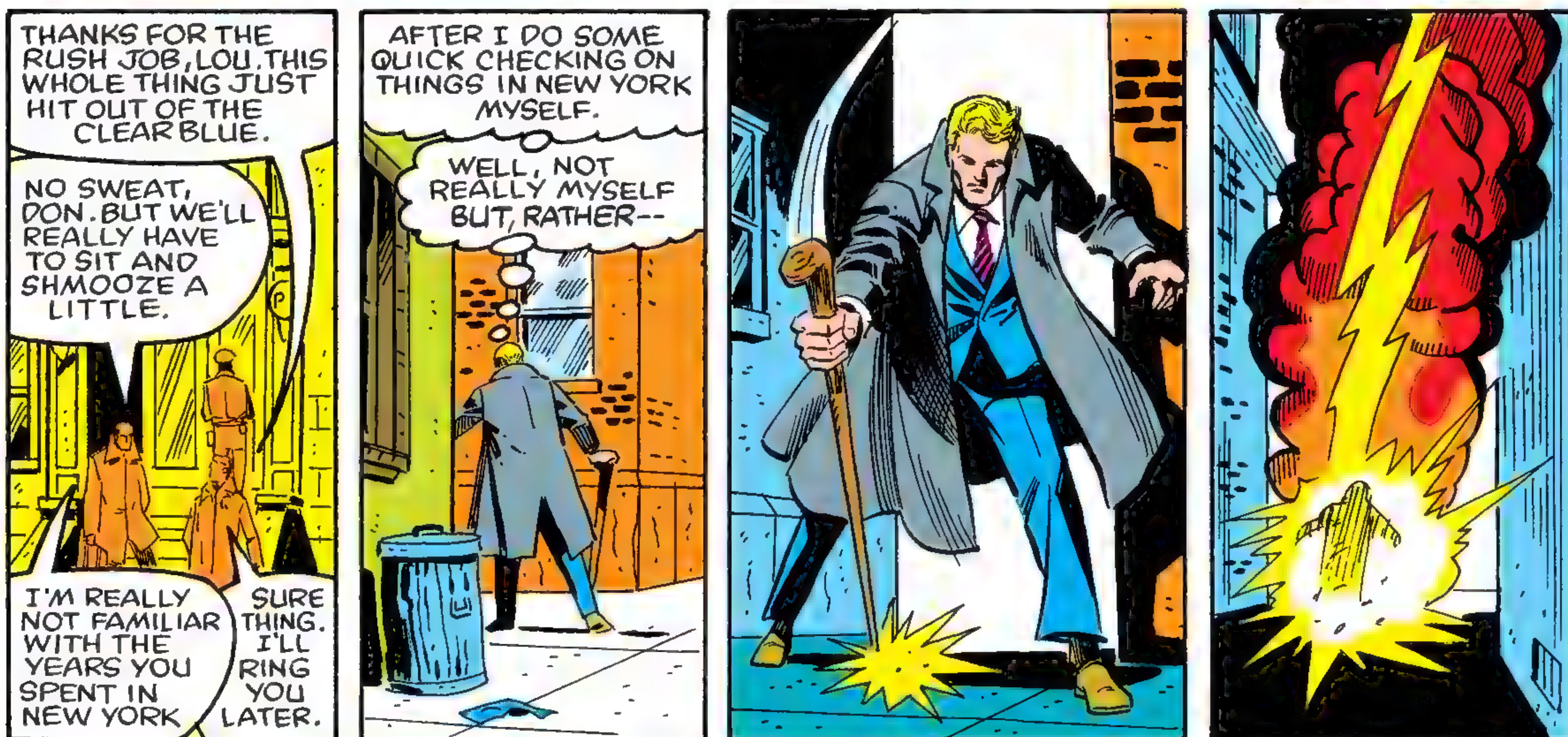
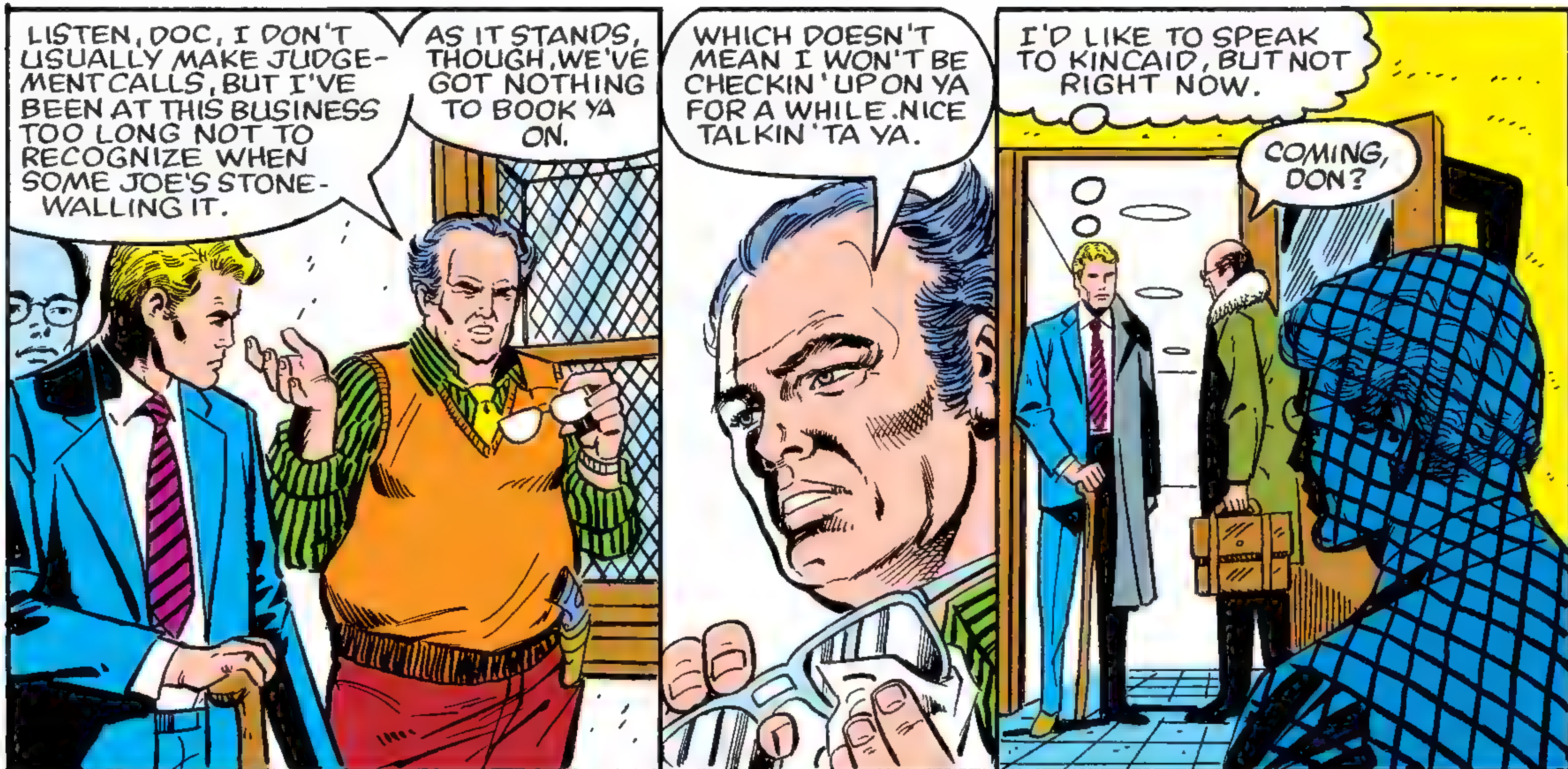


"... AND WITH IT SHE REVIVED JANE BY TRANSFERRING HER OWN LIVING ENERGY INTO JANE'S BODY."

WHEN JANE RETURNED TO ASGARD WITH THOR, SHE TRANSFORMED INTO SIF AGAIN. BUT NOW SIF HERSELF HAS COME TO EARTH, AND JANE'S BODY HAS VANISHED.

I CAN'T EXPLAIN ANY OF THIS WITHOUT DESTROYING MY IDENTITY AS DONALD BLAKE... AND I'M NOT PREPARED TO DO THAT.





MEANWHILE, IN A BOUTIQUE AREA NEARBY, THE GODDESS SIF HAS JUST COMPLETED A MORNING OF SHOPPING...

'TIS DIFFICULT PRETENDING TO BE A MORTAL, FOR MY SPIRITS CANNOT ABIDE THE SNAIL'S PACE OF HUMANS HERE ON MIDGARD.

STILL, THOR WILL BE CHEERED THAT I HAVE ACQUIRED EARTHLY FASHIONS IN ORDER TO PLAY THE ROLE OF DONALD BLAKE'S COUSIN SIBYL.

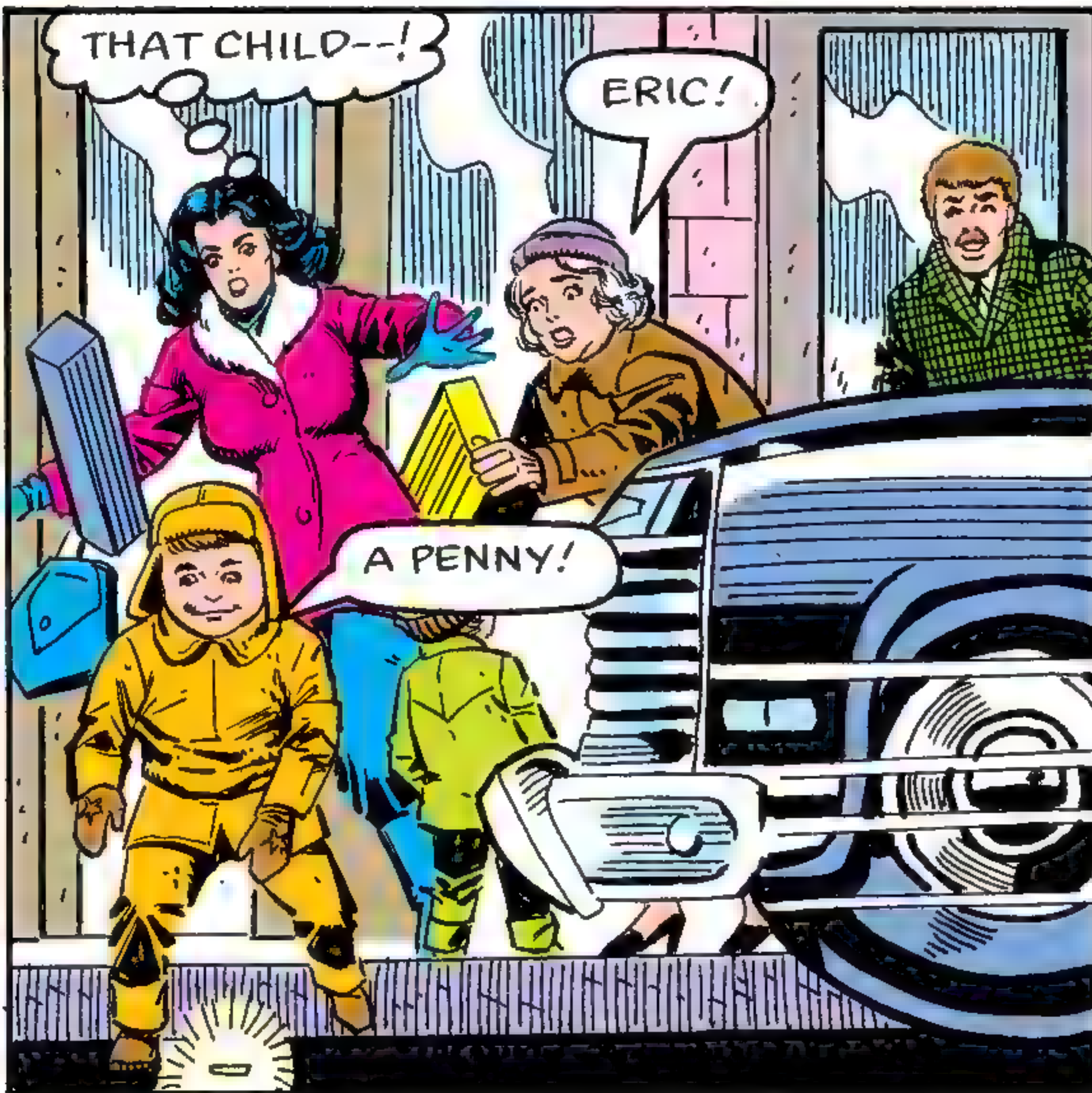
NOW BUTTON UP WELL. WE DON'T NEED YOU CATCHING WHATEVER'S GOING AROUND.



THAT CHILD---

ERIC!

A PENNY!



I MUST CATCH THIS CAR...

... THEN PRESS UPON IT WITH MY GODLY STRENGTH SO THAT ITS WHEELS MAY NOT SPIN.



I'M SORRY, LADY-- THE KID CAME OUTTA NOWHERE.

ERIC! THANK GOODNESS!

BUT HOW'D'YA LIKE THEM BRAKES?!



I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU DID THERE, MA'AM, BUT YOU MANAGED TO SAVE THAT BOY'S LIFE. HERE LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND.

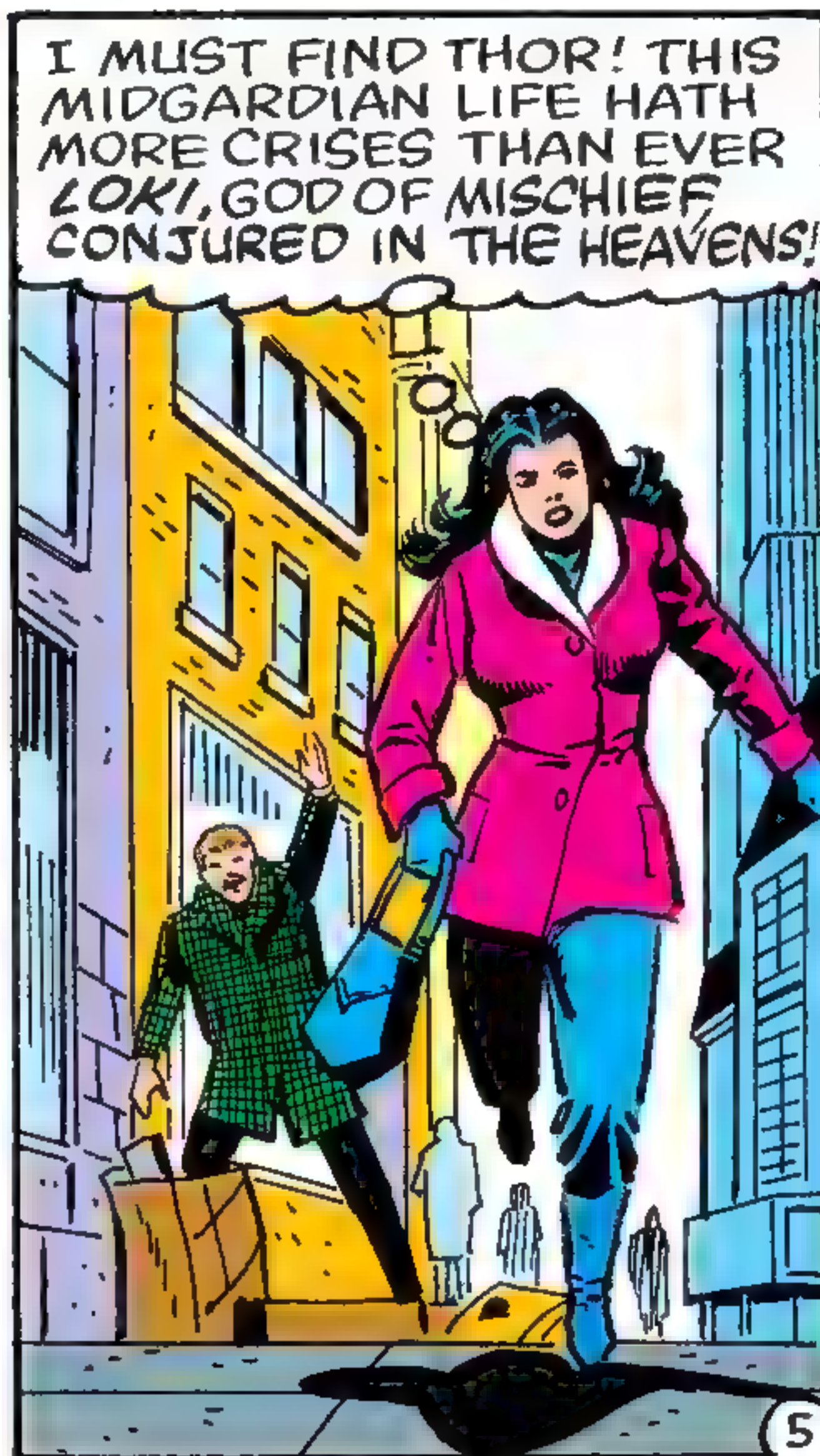
WOOPS, MY PAPER--

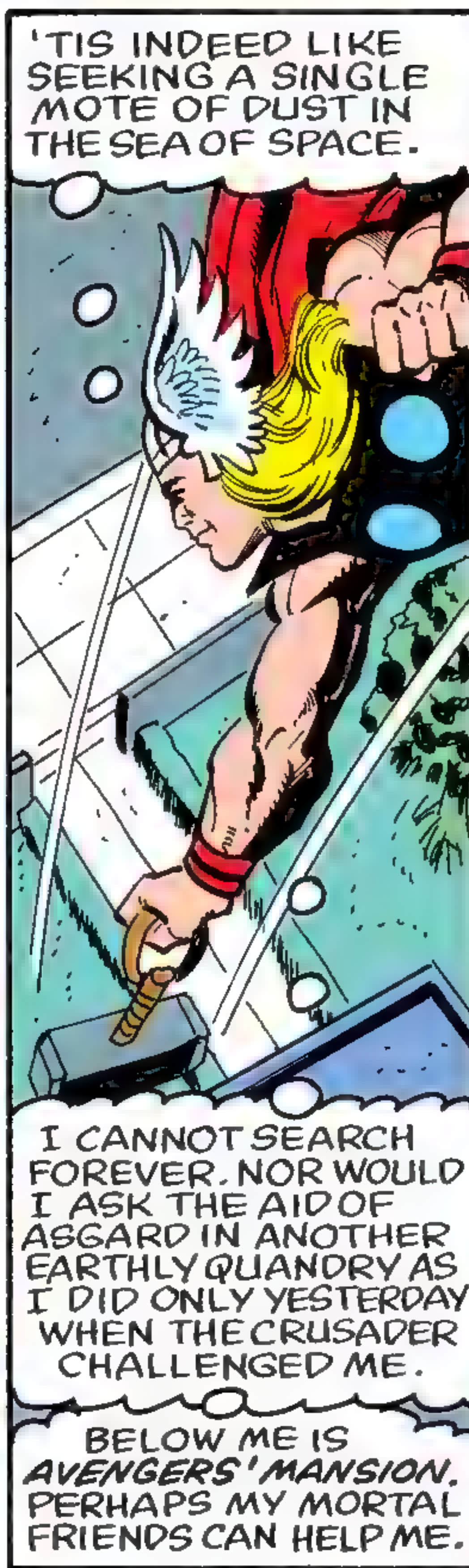
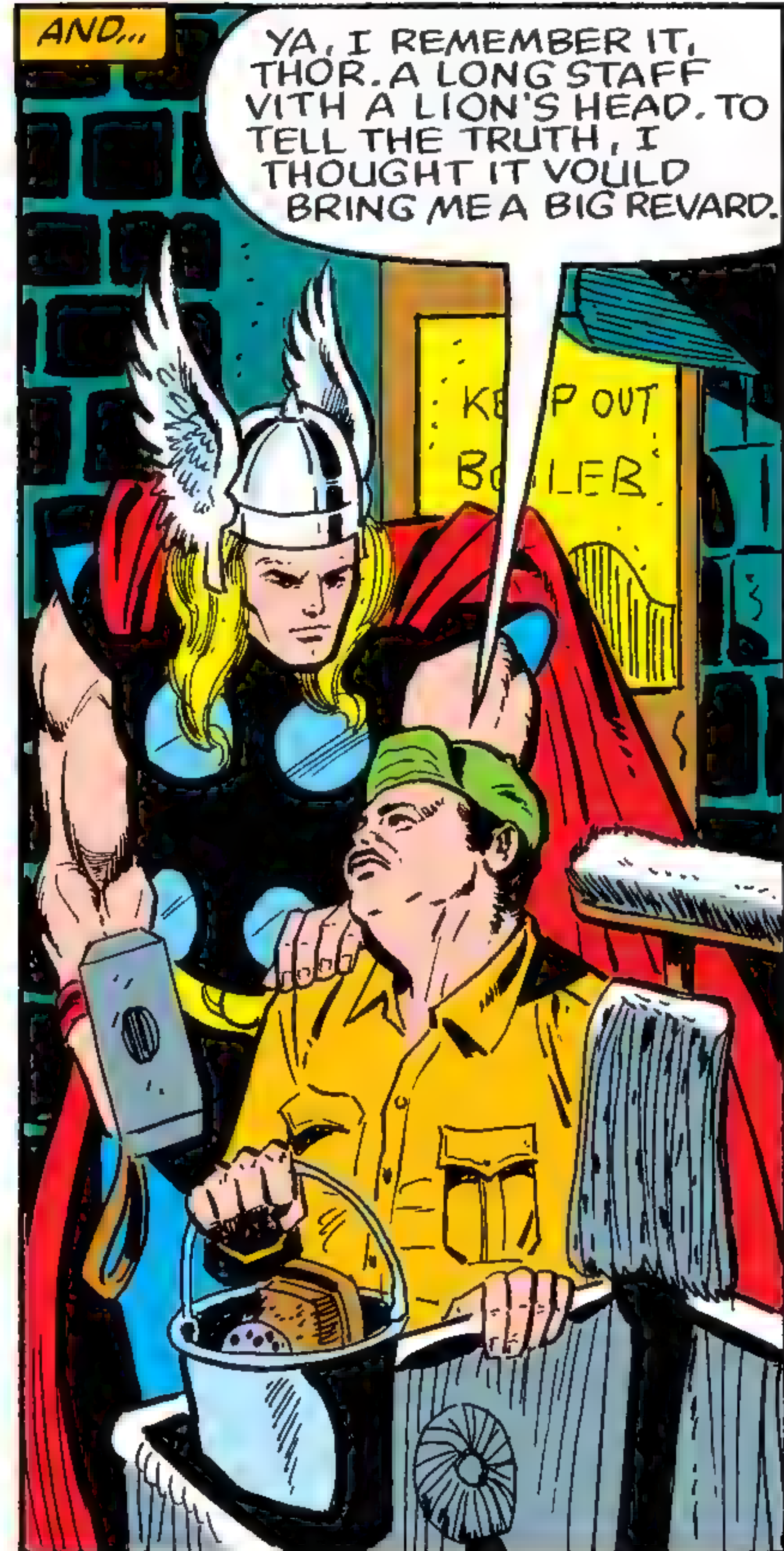
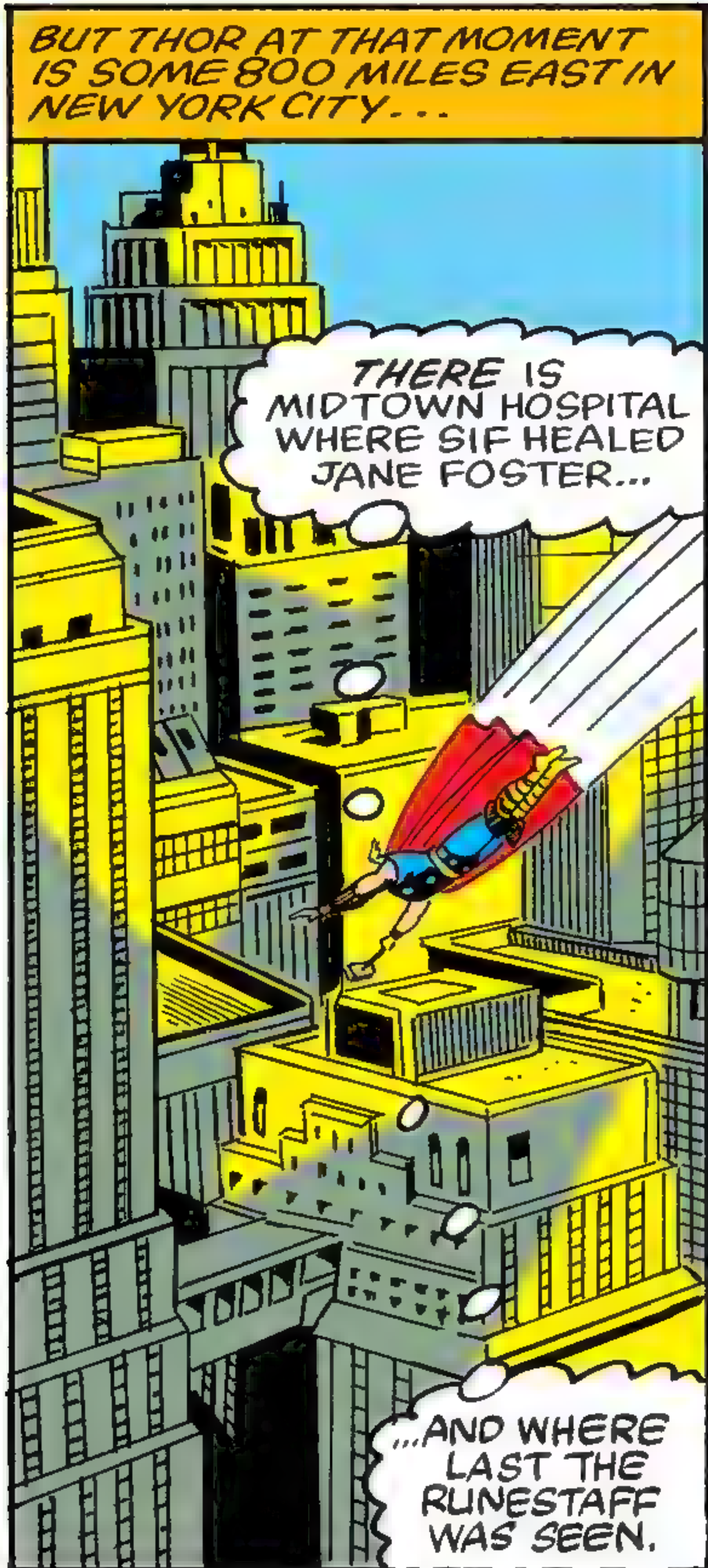


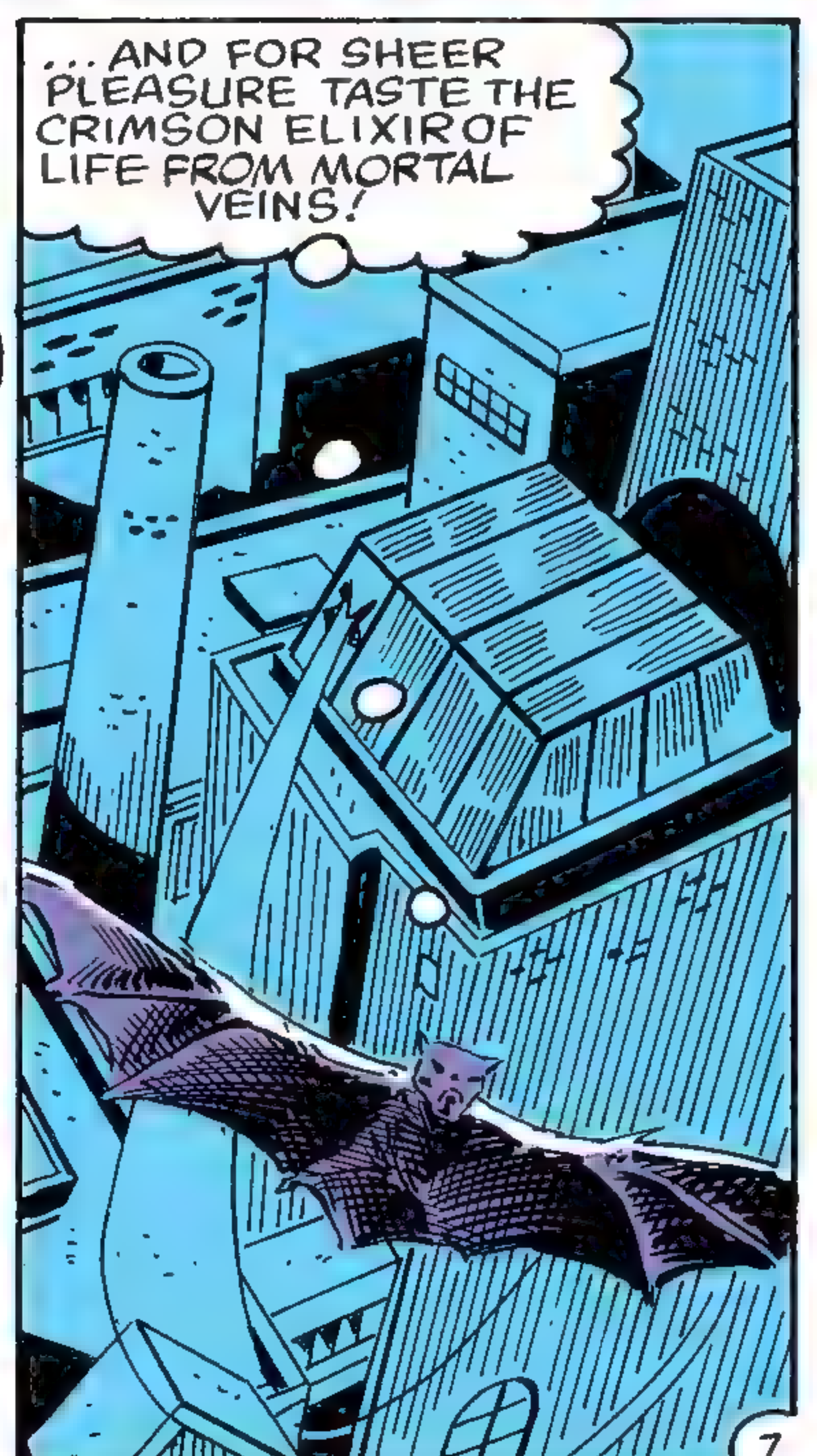
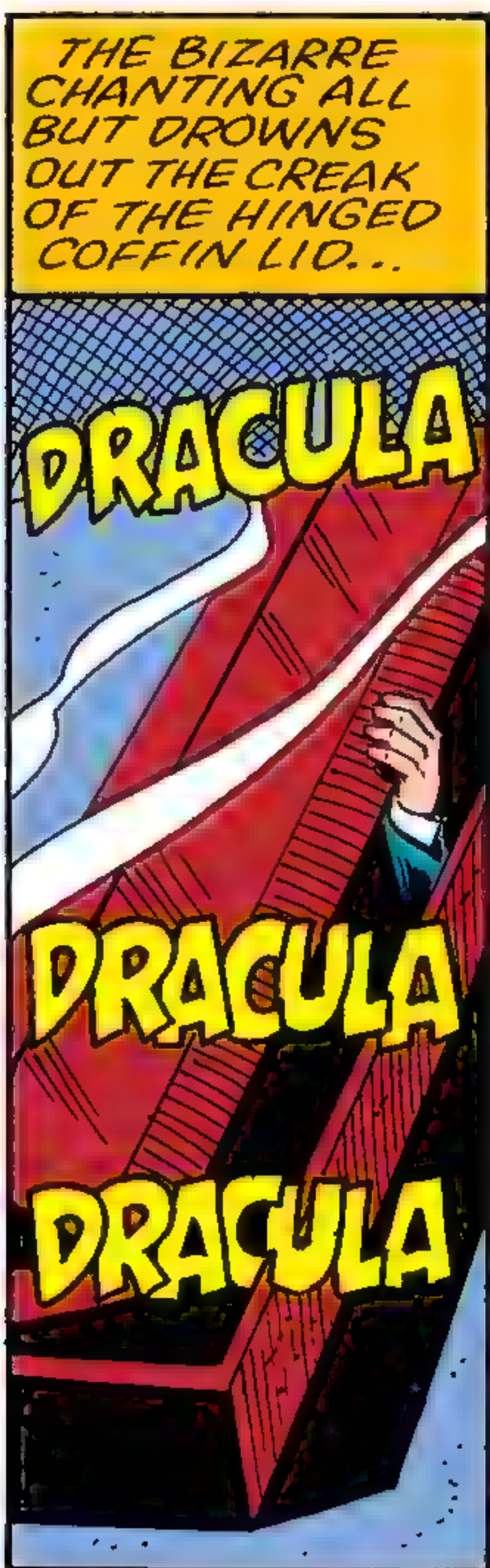
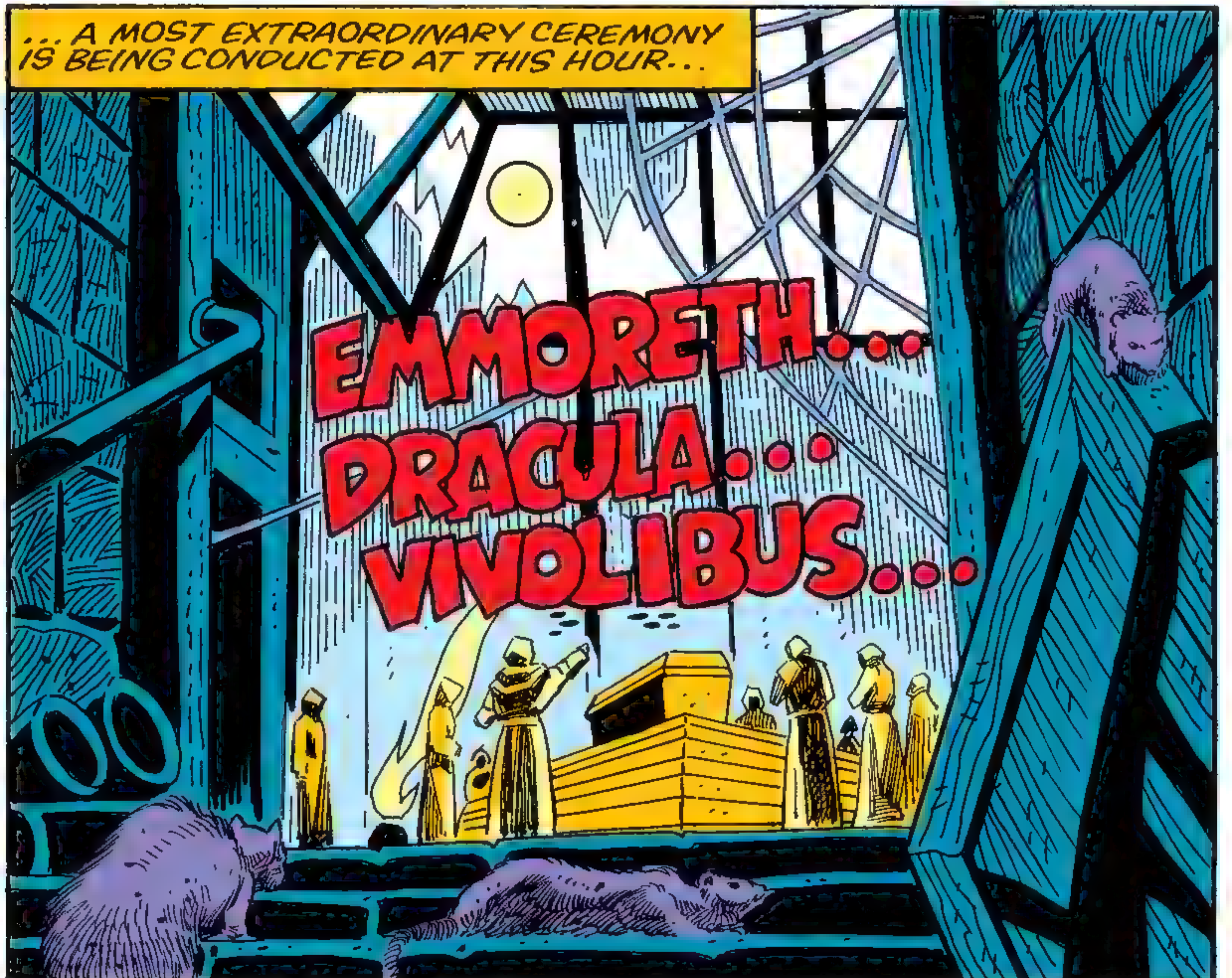
DONALD BLAKE?! OH, NO!



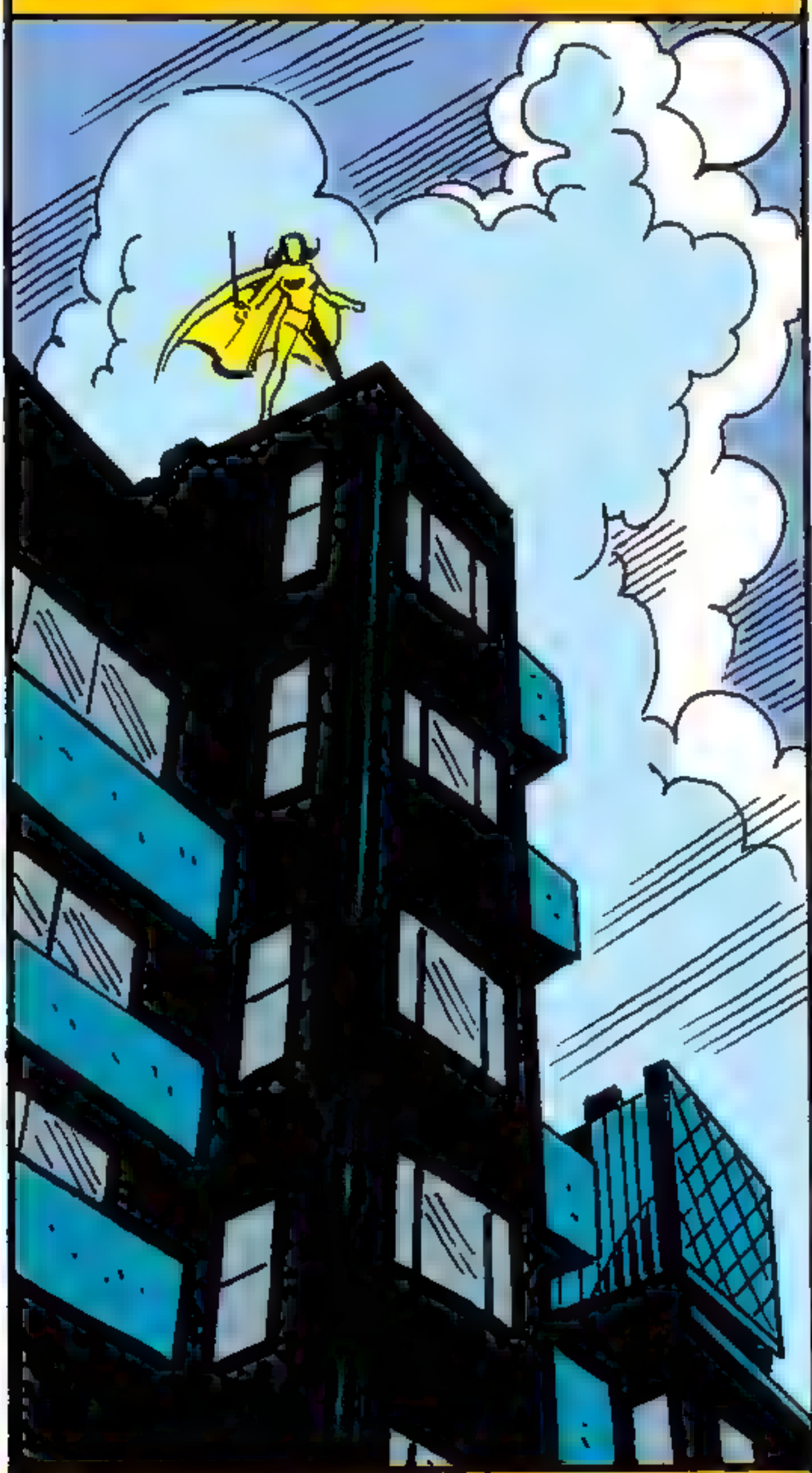
I MUST FIND THOR! THIS MIDGARDIAN LIFE HATH MORE CRISES THAN EVER LOKI, GOD OF MISCHIEF CONJURED IN THE HEAVENS!







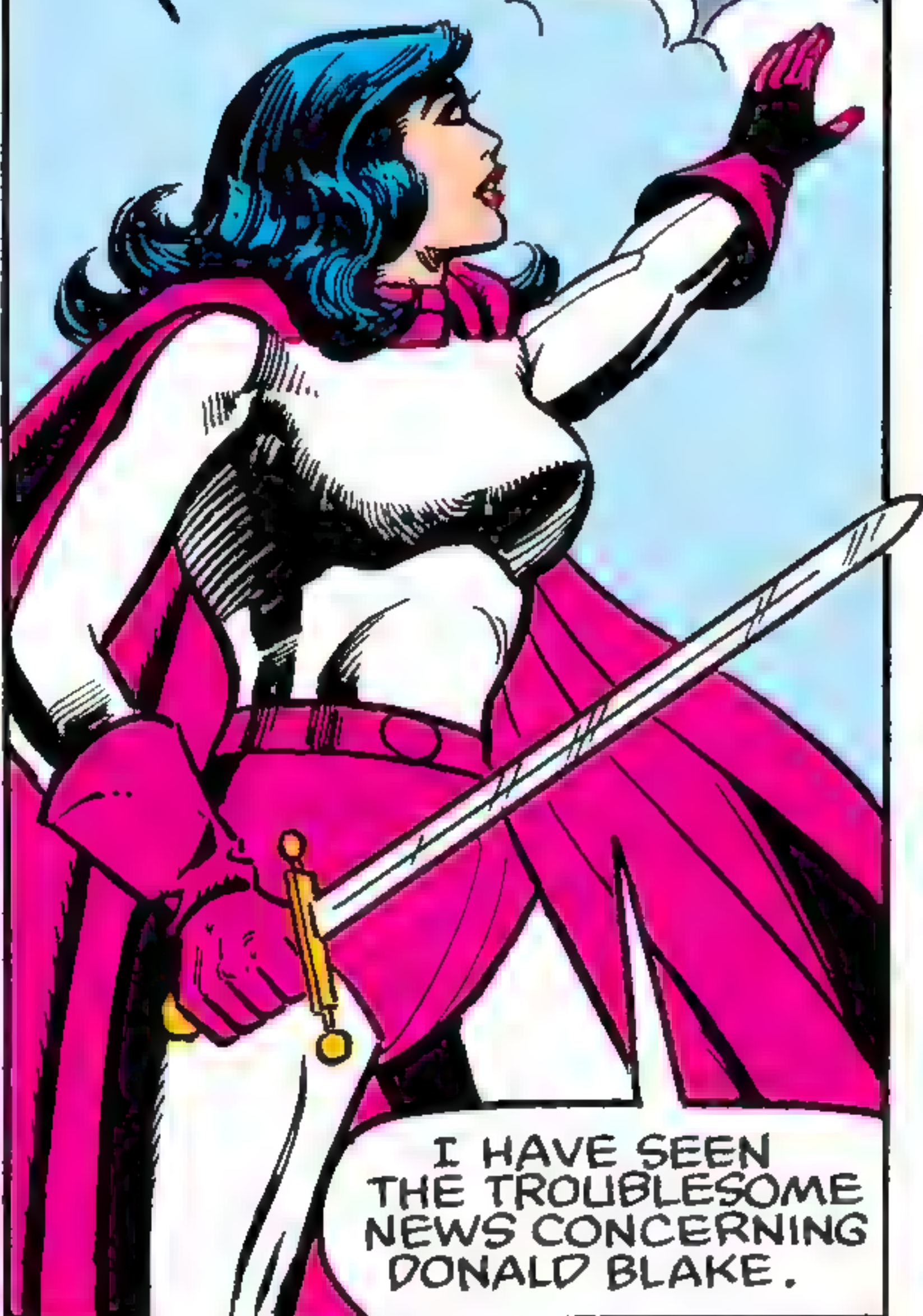
THAT EVENING, IN CHICAGO...



"THOUGH SHE HAS LIVED MANY TIMES THE SPAN OF ANY MORTAL, STILL THE GODDESS SIF FEELS THE WEIGHT OF EVERY PASSING MINUTE AS SHE ANXIOUSLY SCOURS THE SKY FOR HER MISSING PRINCE..."

MY NOBLE LORD THOR! I HAVE SOUGHT THEE THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

A HUNDRED PARDONS, MY LADY! BUT THE PLIGHT OF DONALD BLAKE DREW ME HENCE.



I HAVE SEEN THE TROUBLESOME NEWS CONCERNING DONALD BLAKE.

MY LOVE--DOST THOU NOW OWN CAUSE ENOUGH TO FORSAKE YOUR MORTAL GUISE?



THEN MIGHT I GAZE UPON THY GODLY COUNTENANCE FOR ALL ETERNITY.



THOR, HOW I LONG TO EMBRACE THEE IN MY ARMS, AND--

AND I THEE.

SWEET SIF, I COULD NOT FIND THE MYSTIC RUNESTAFF. THINK, MY GODDESS, WHERE MIGHT IT BE?

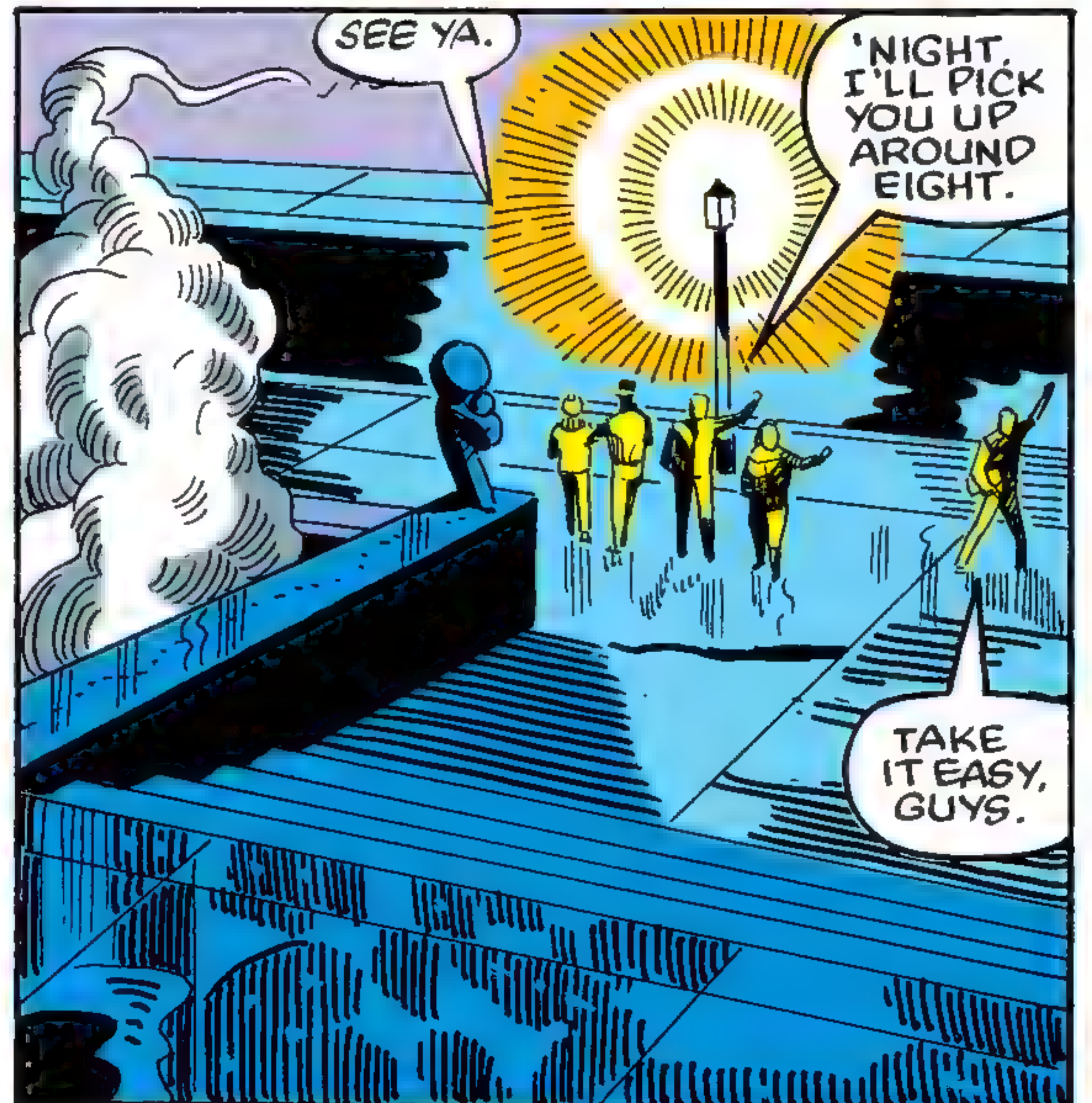
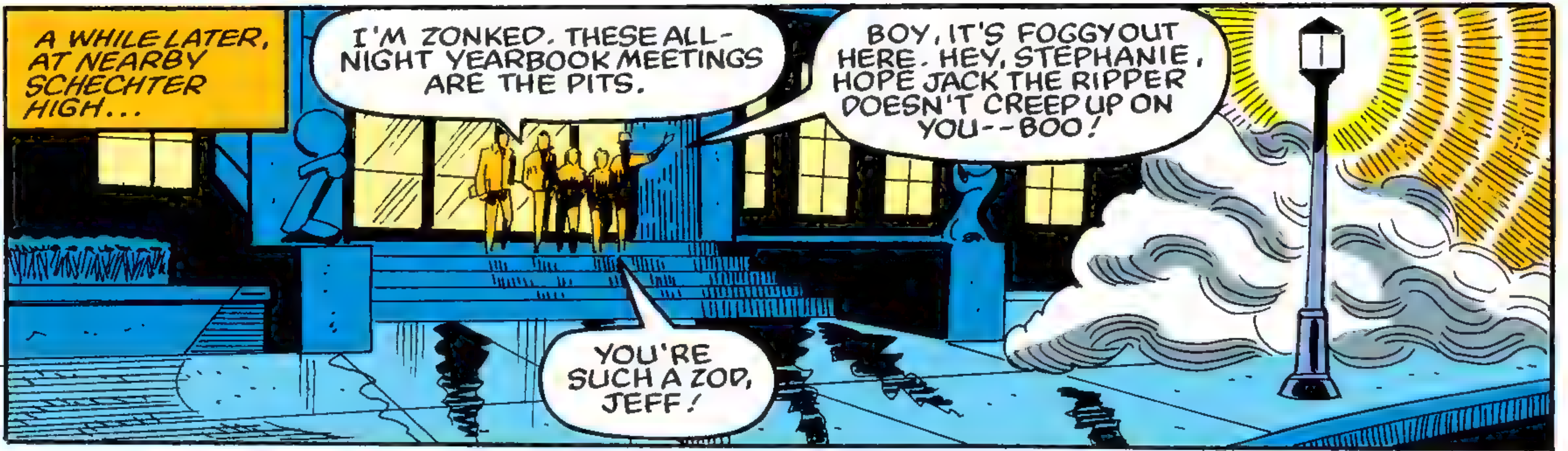
I KNOW NOT, THOR.

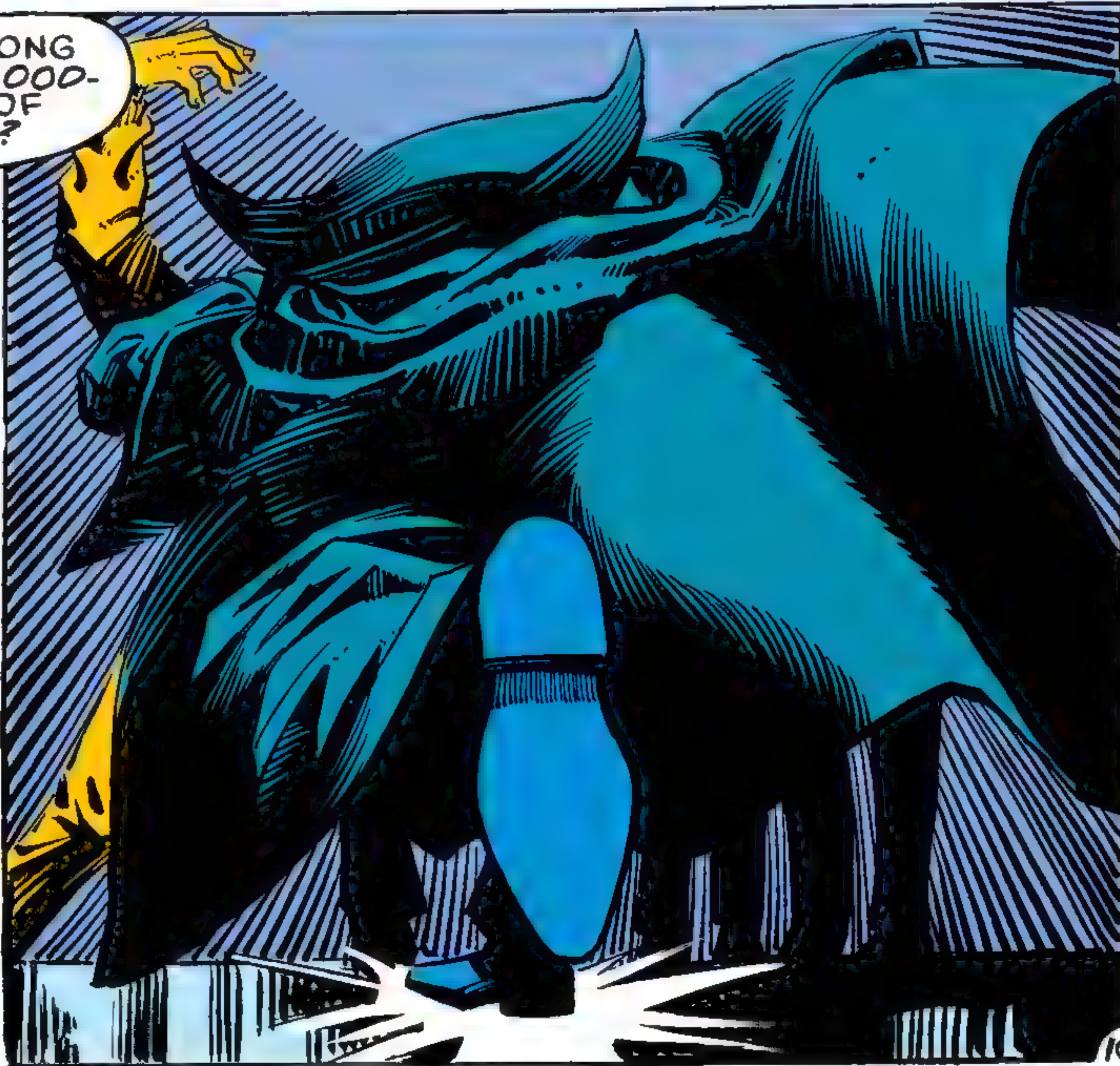
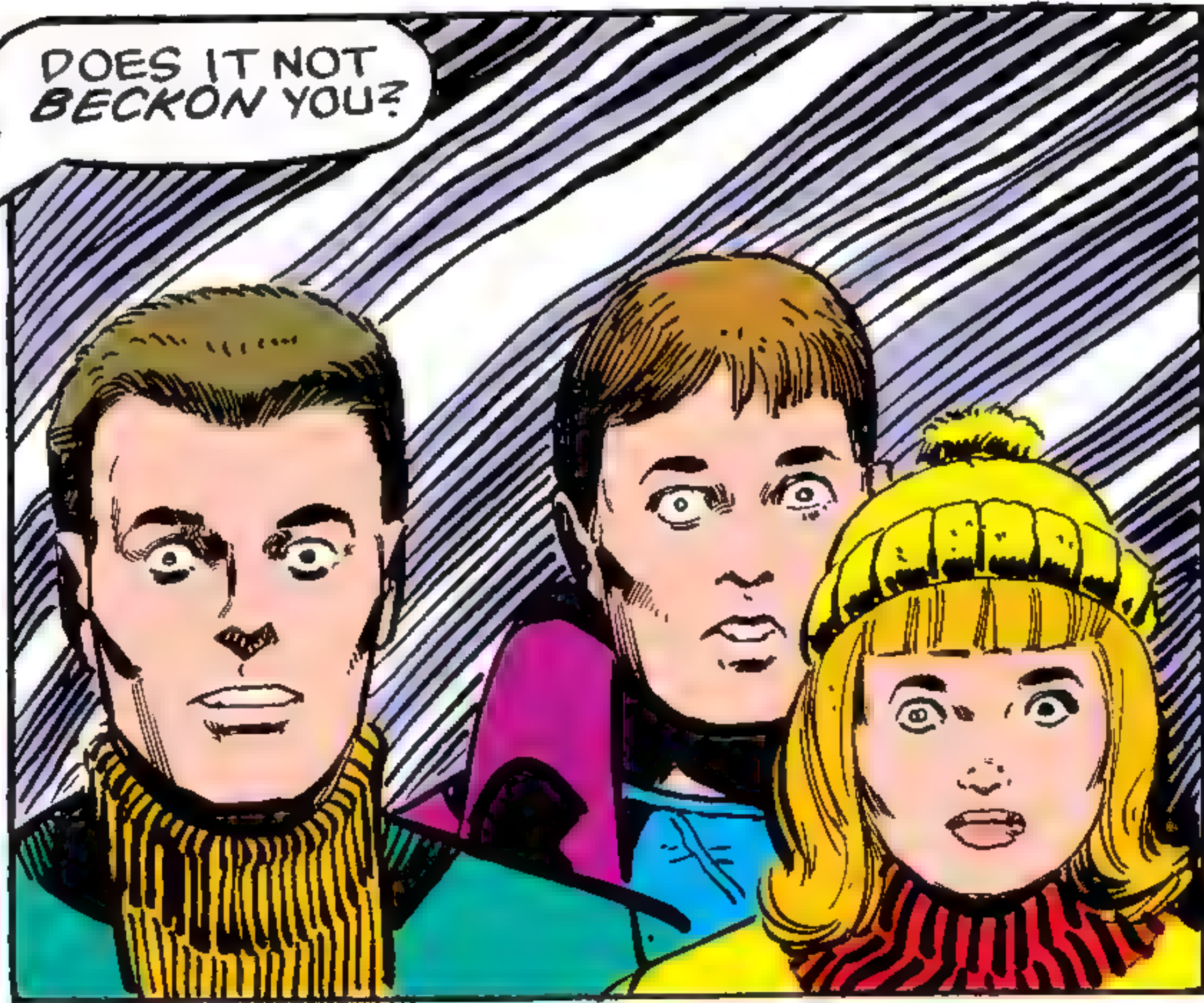


DOTH DWELLING ON MIDGARD SAP THEE OF THY VERY PASSION FOR ME, MY PRINCE?

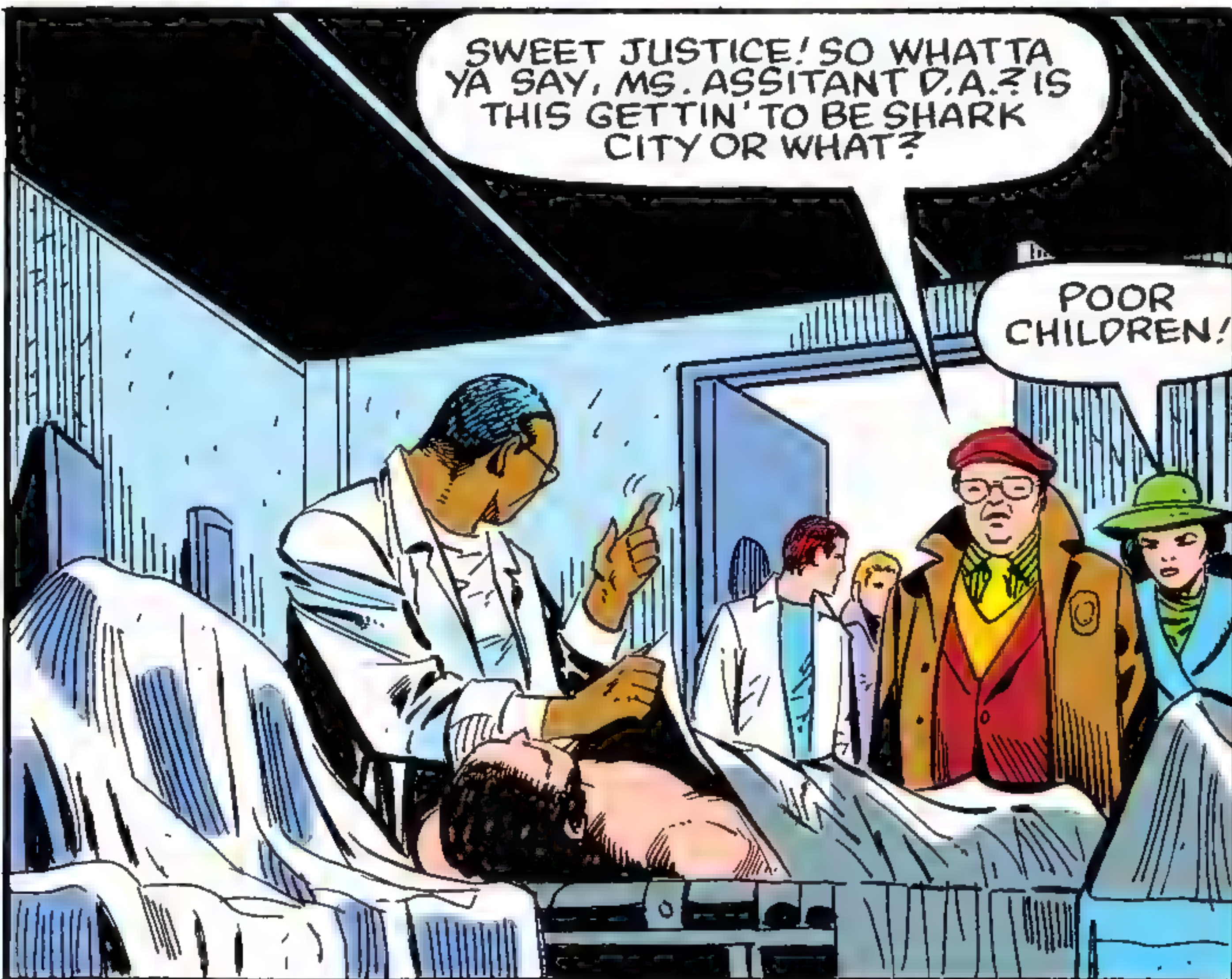
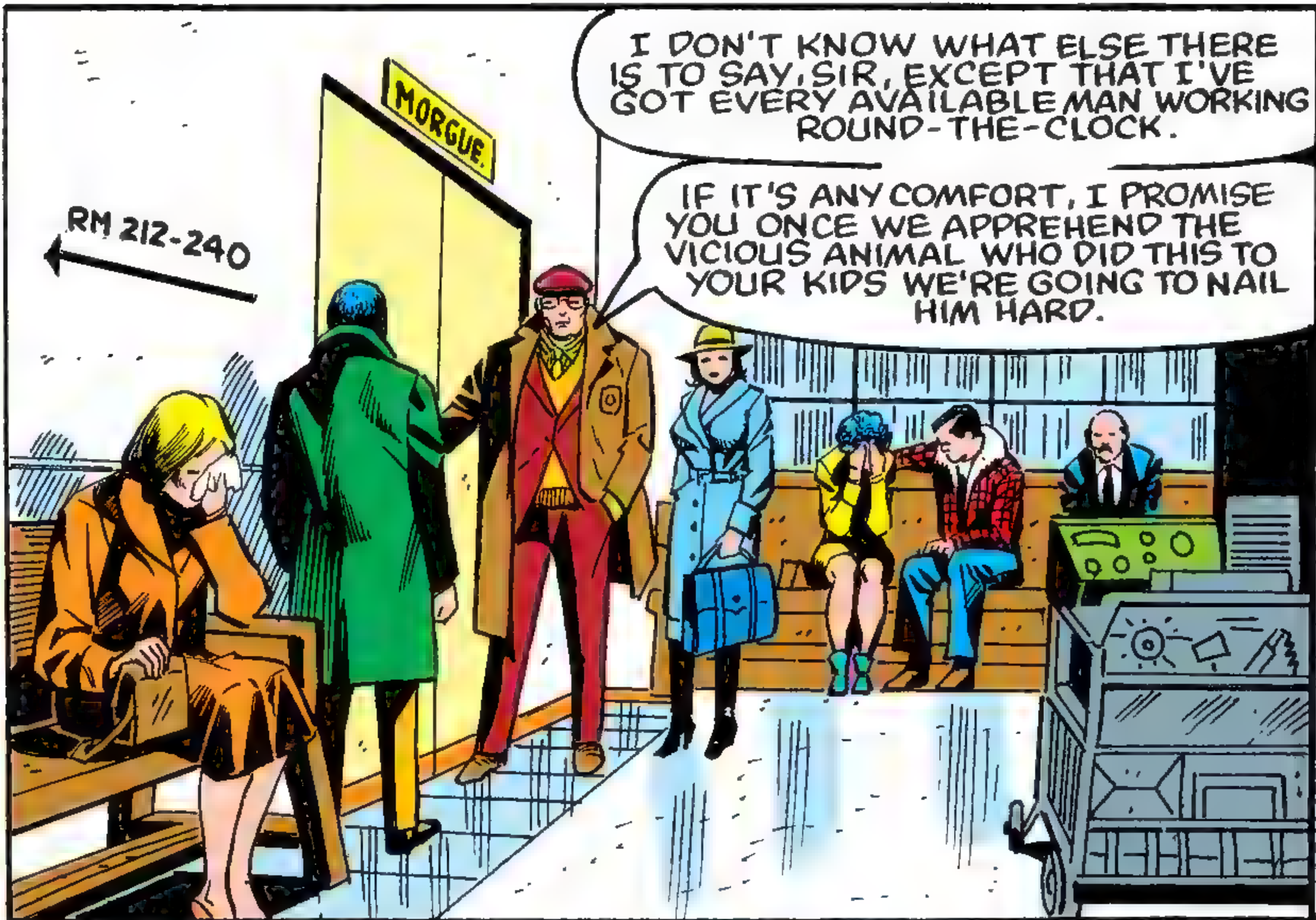


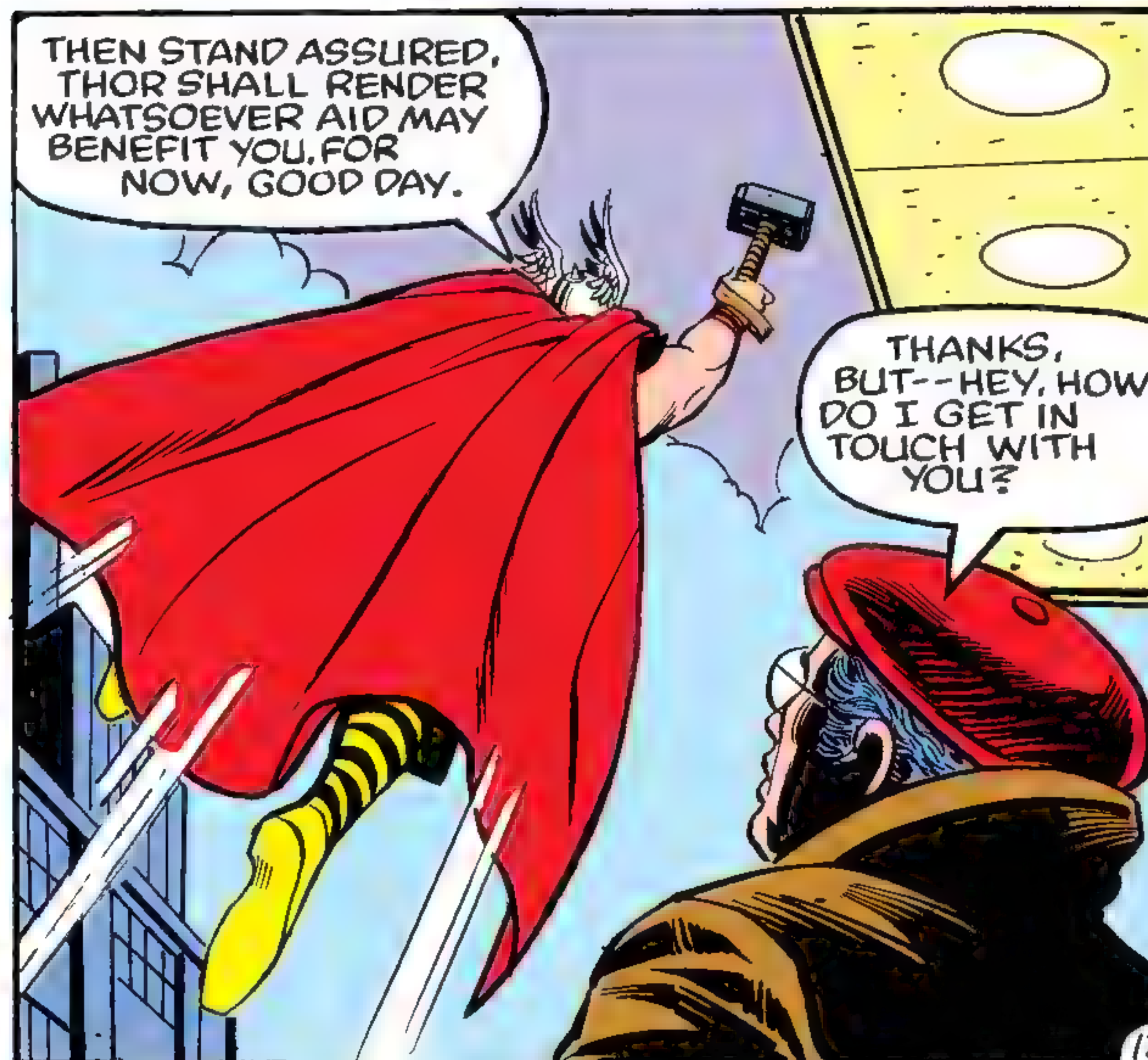
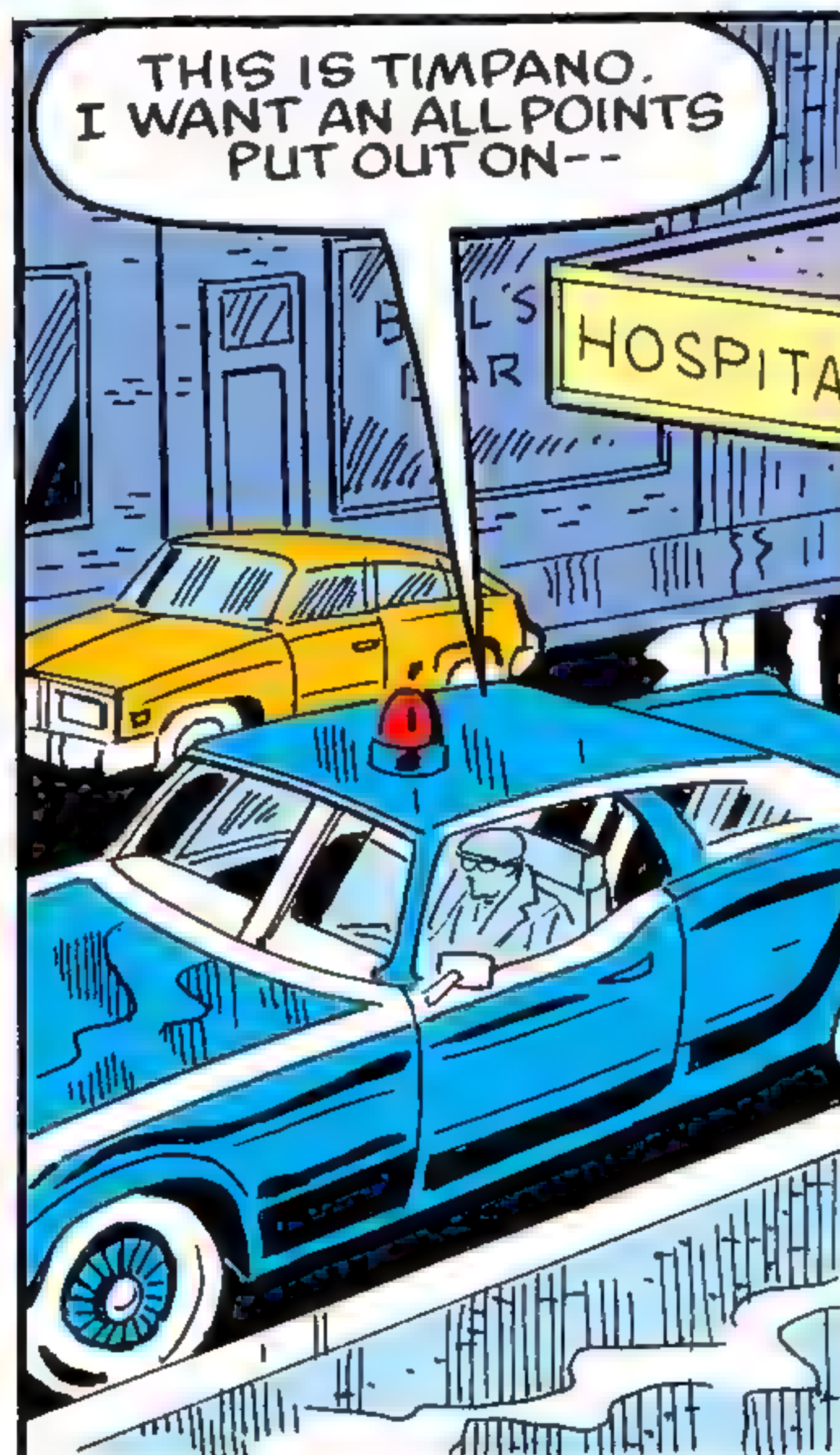
WHAT POWER DOES THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS SENSE BELOW?

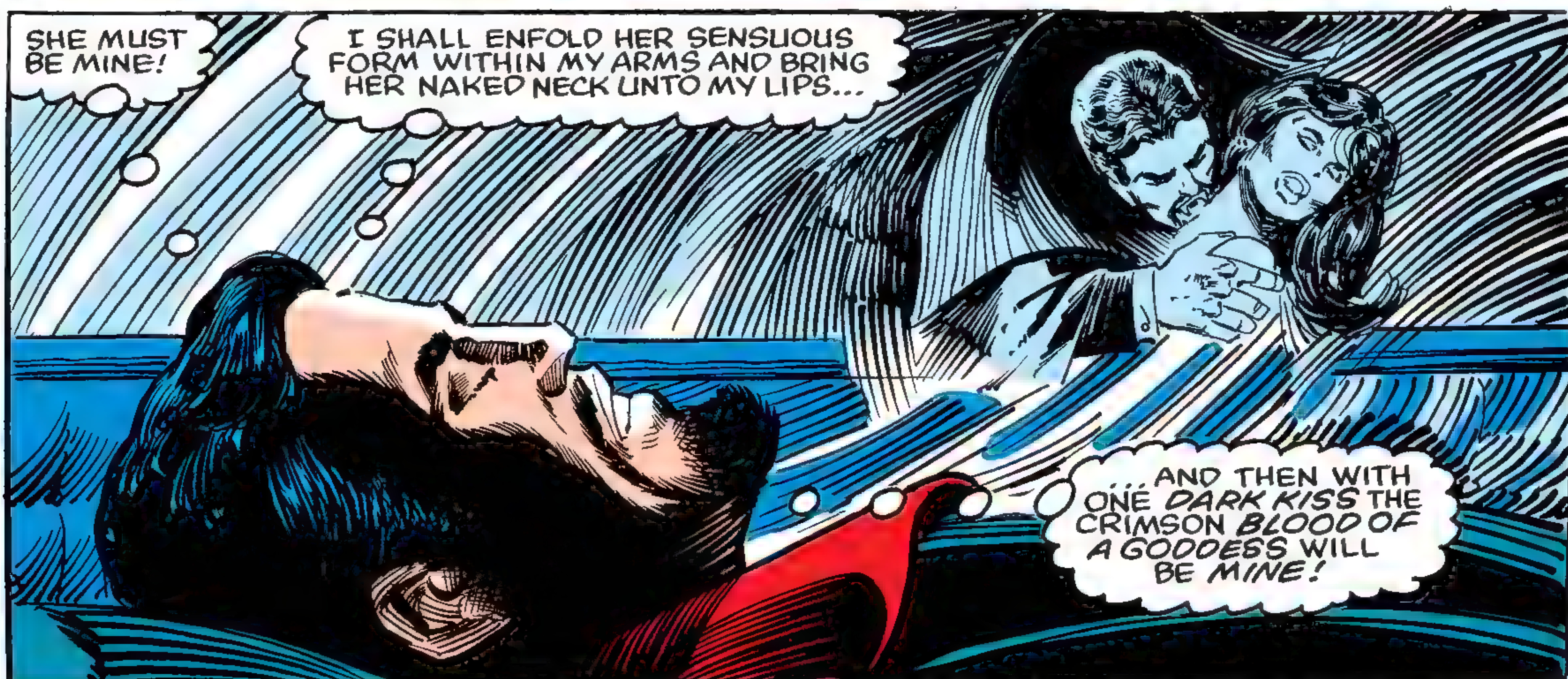
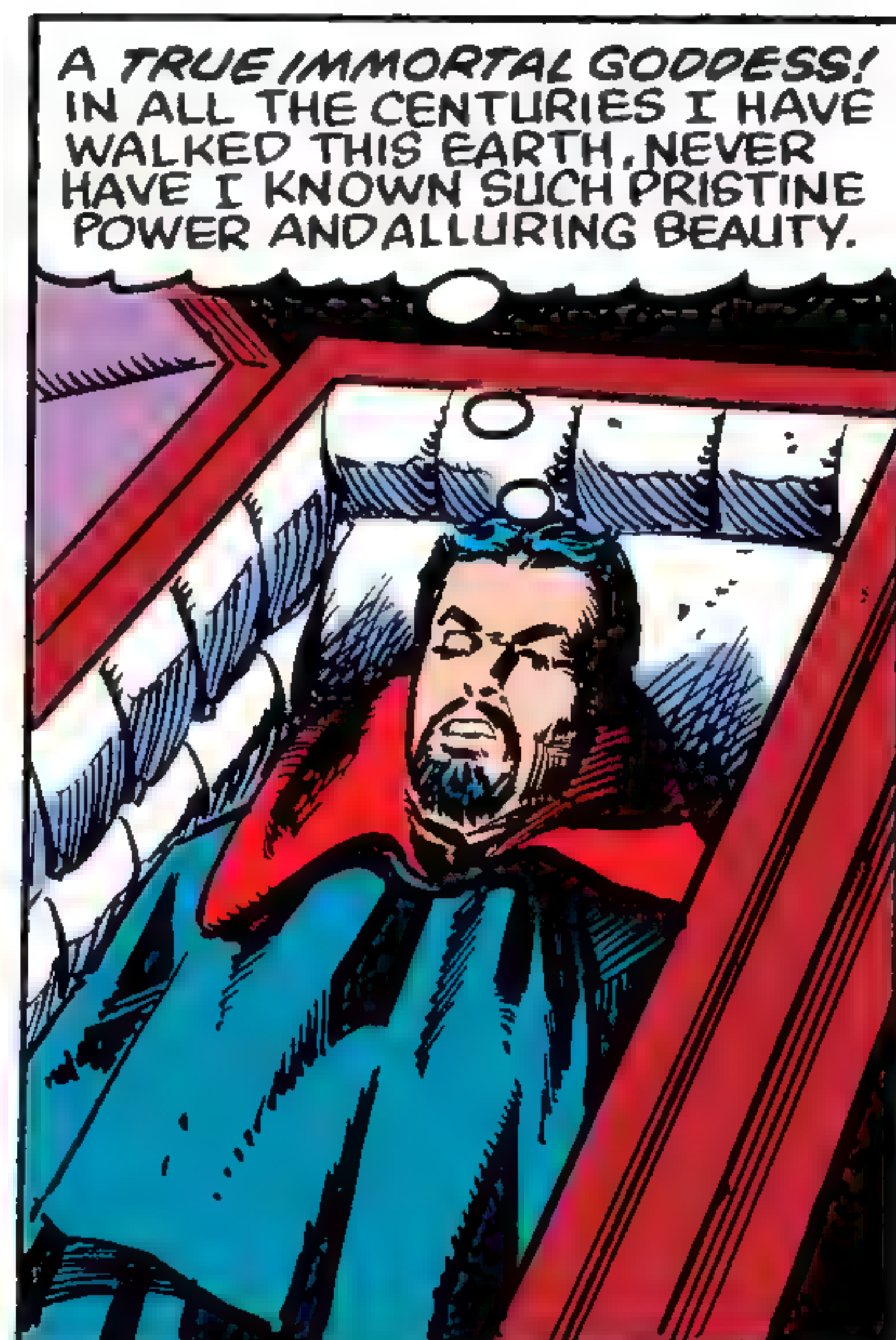
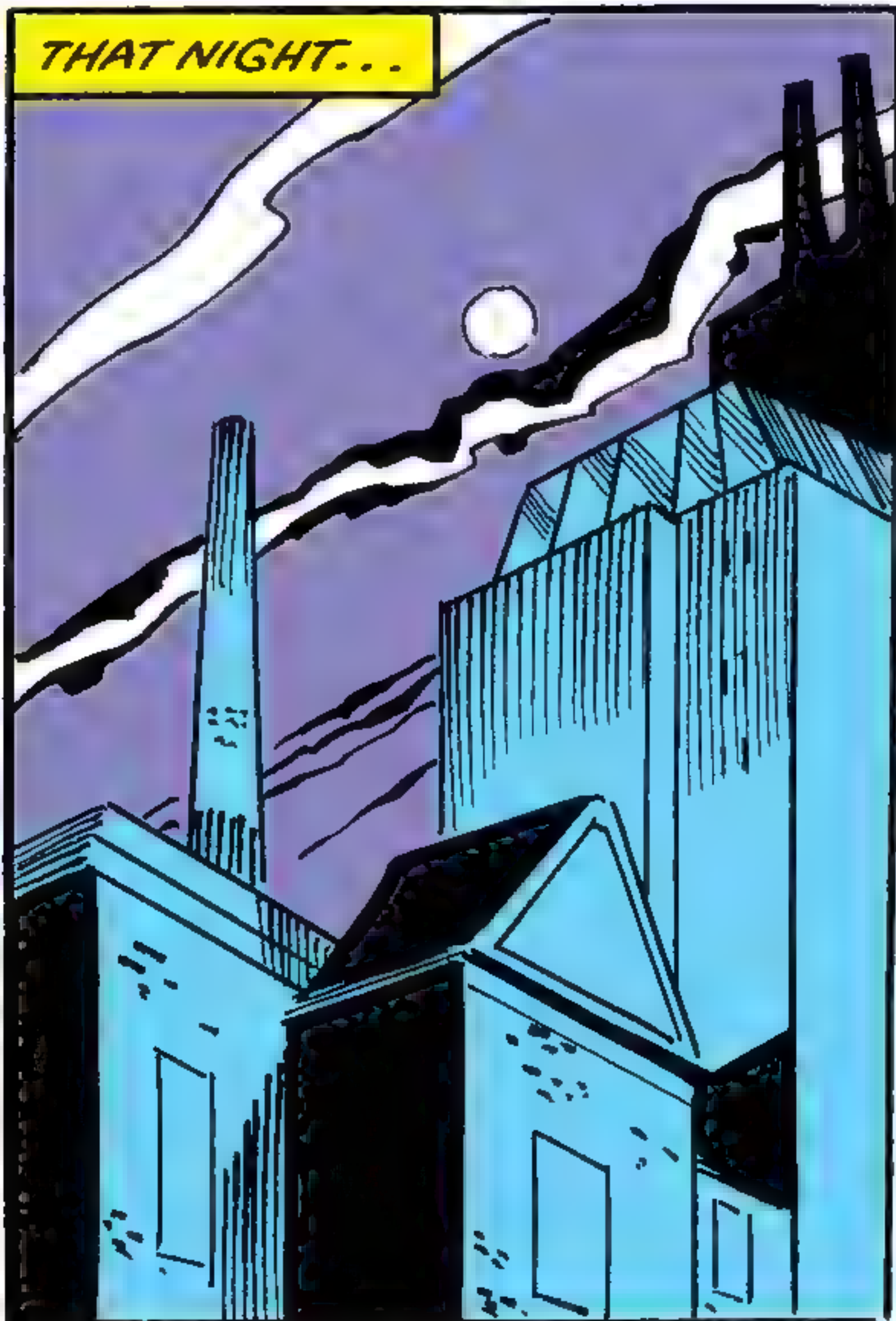


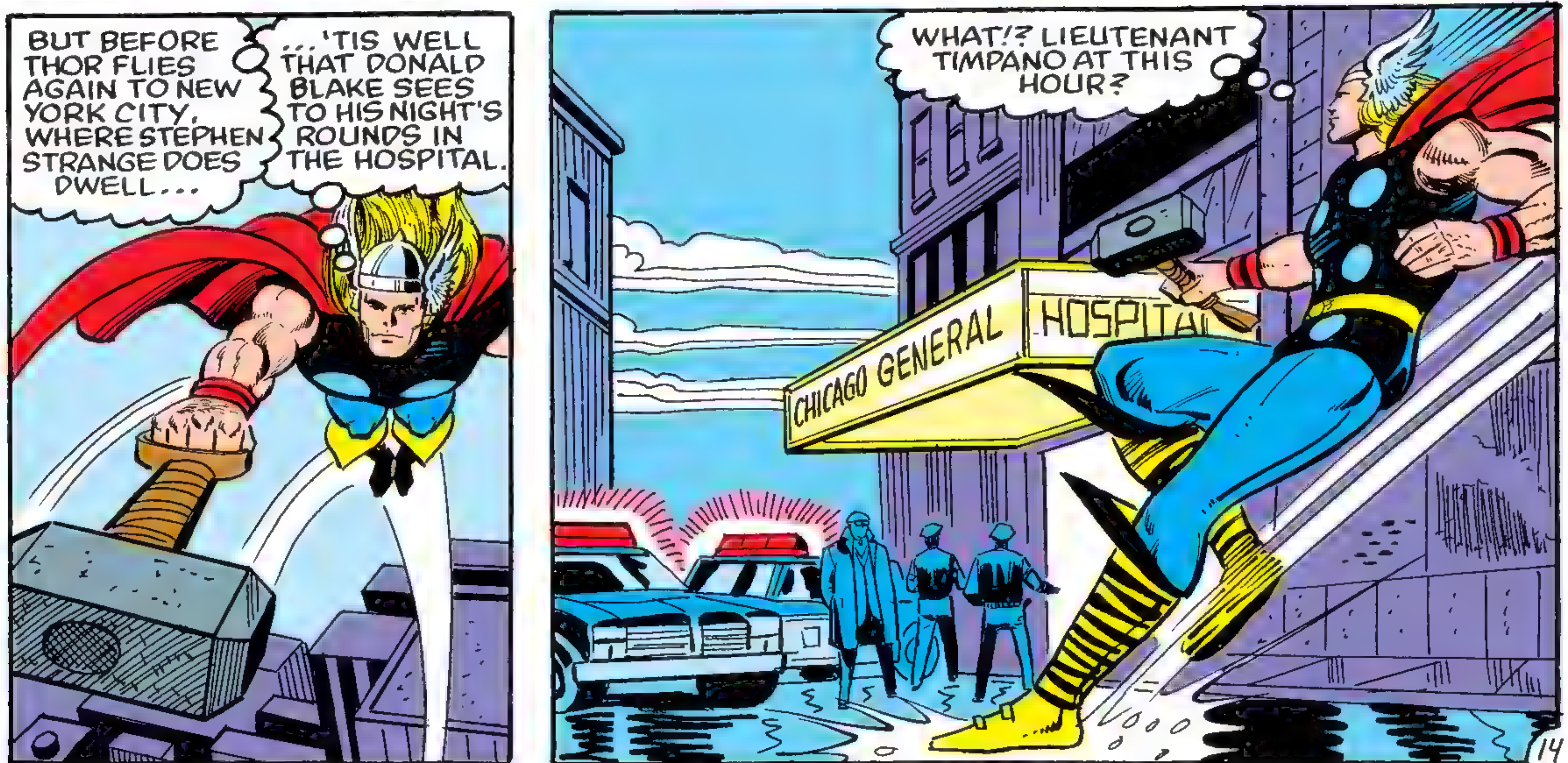
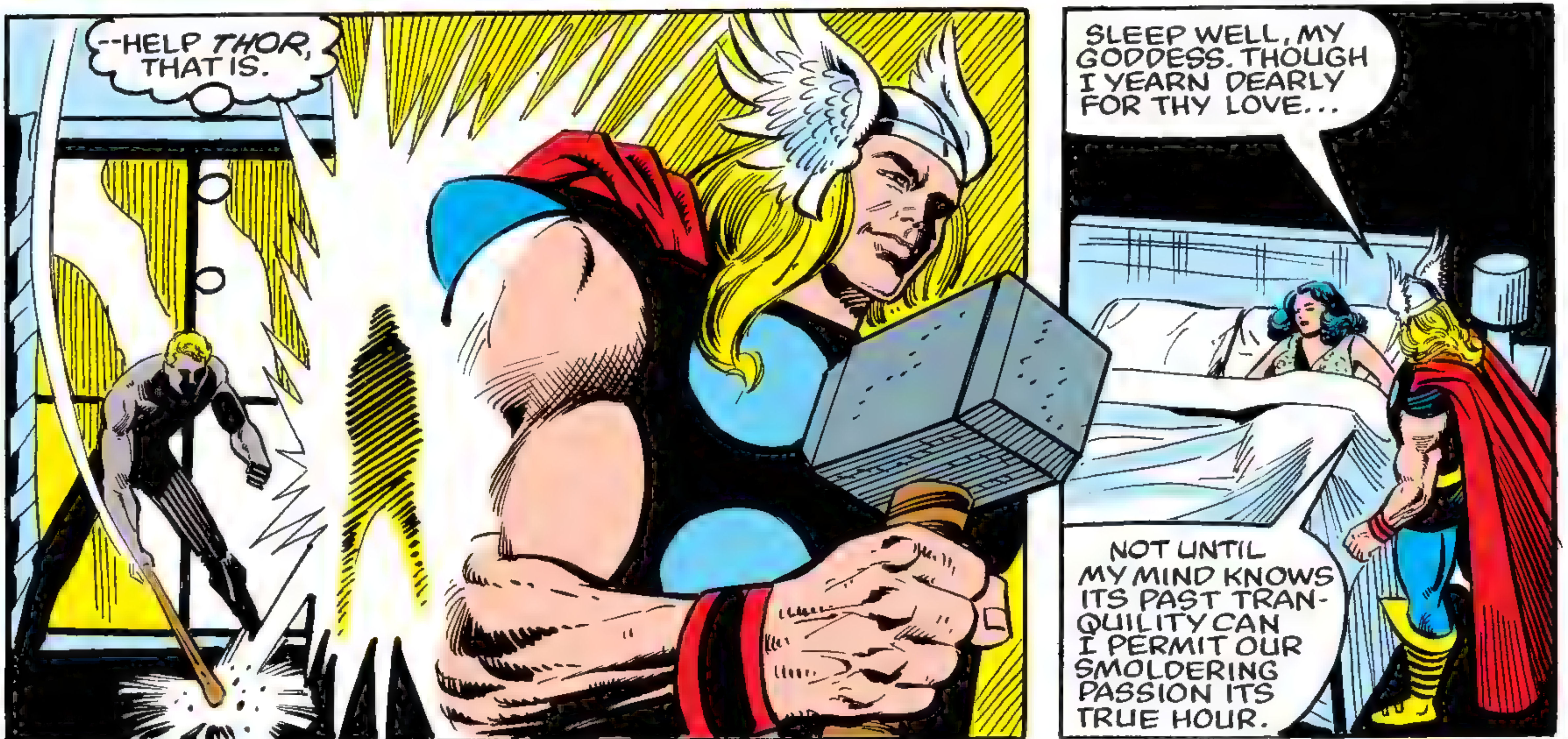
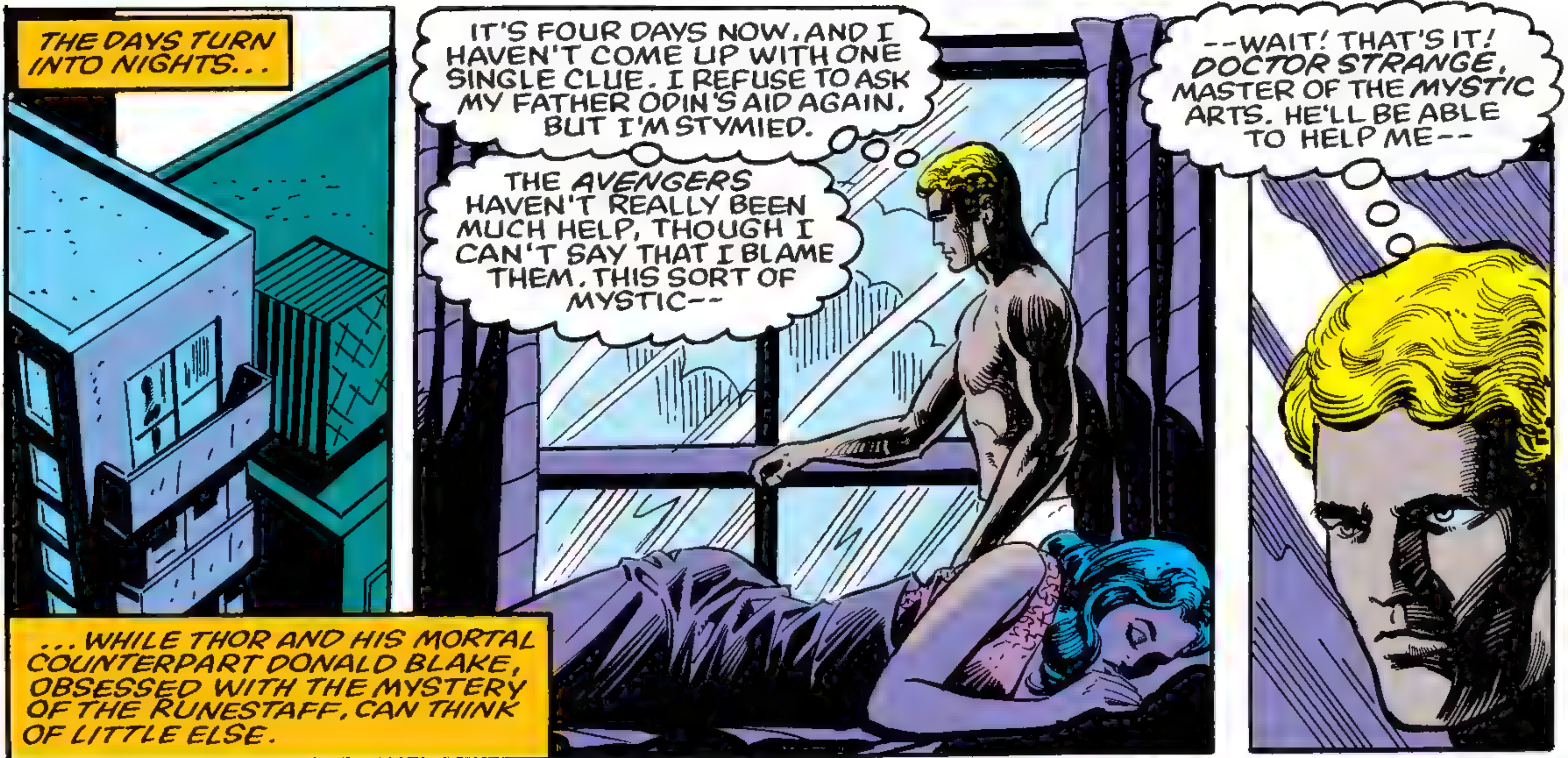


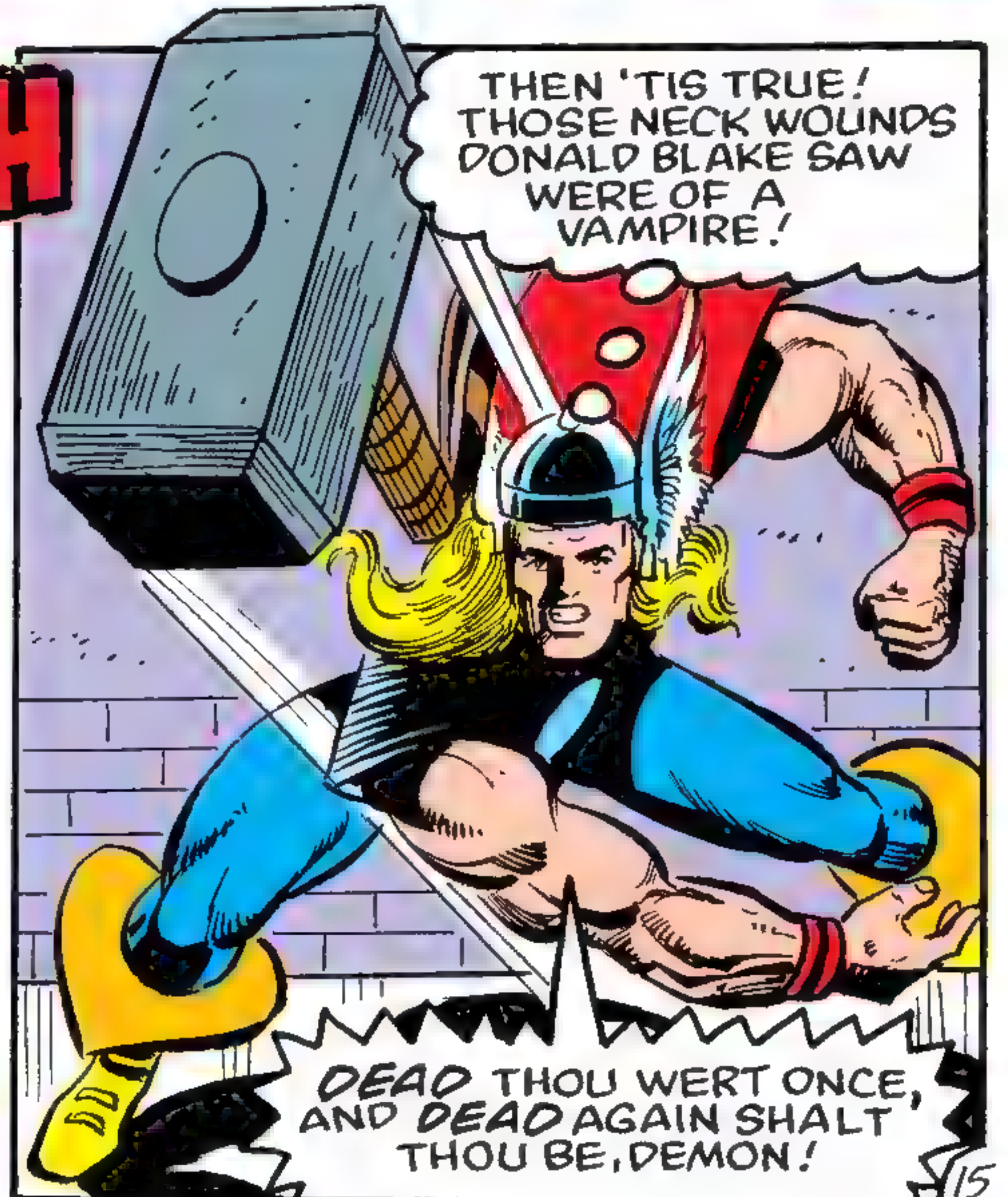
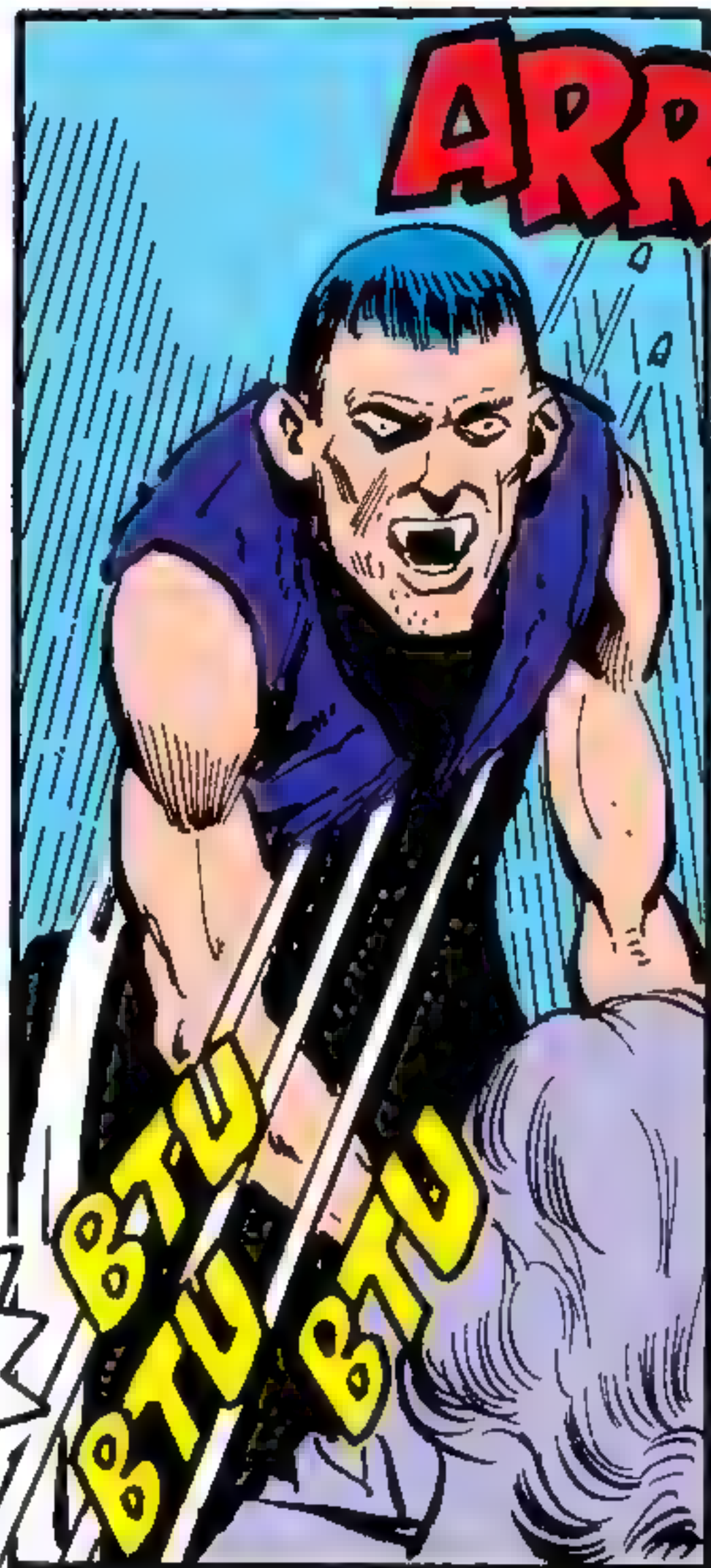
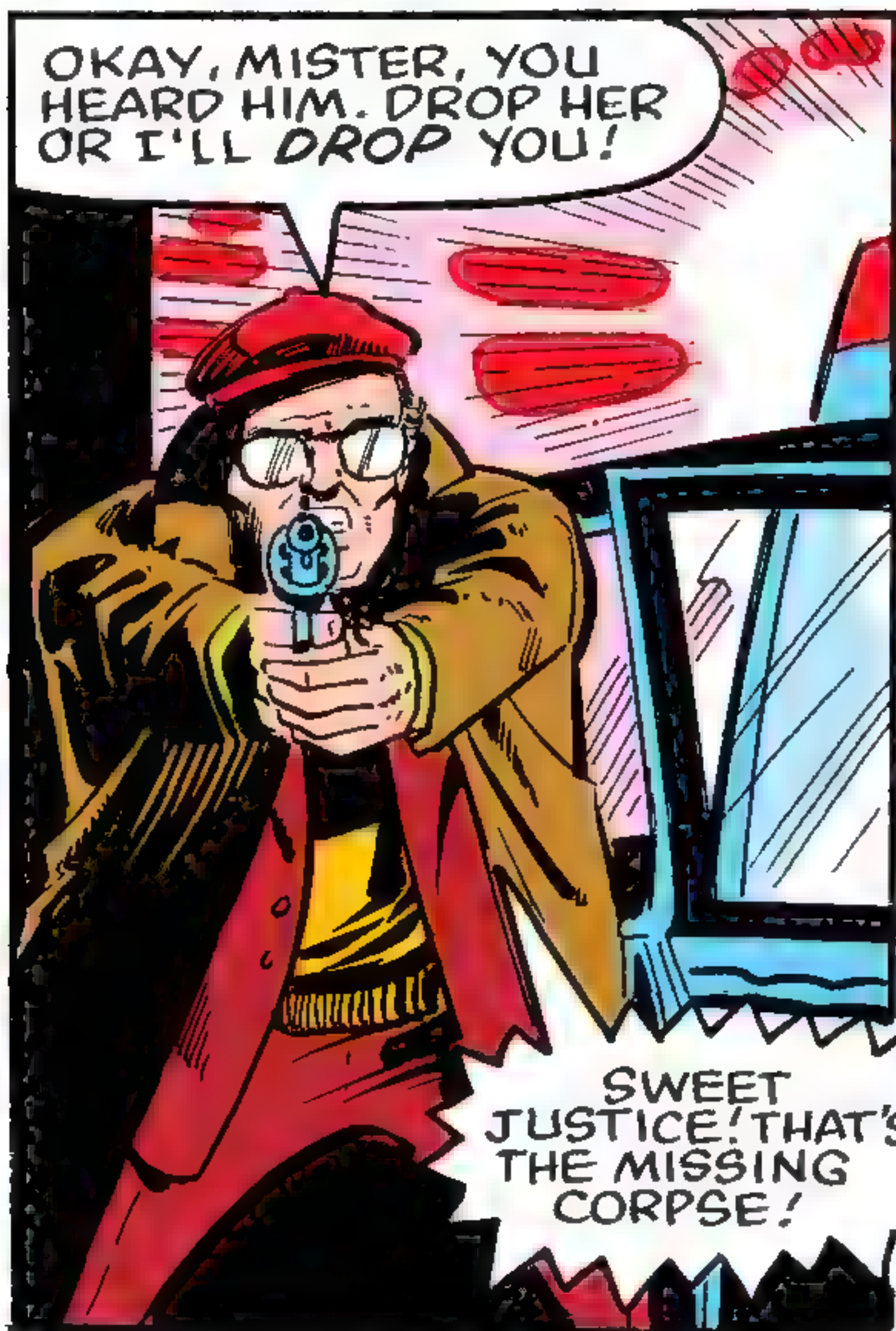
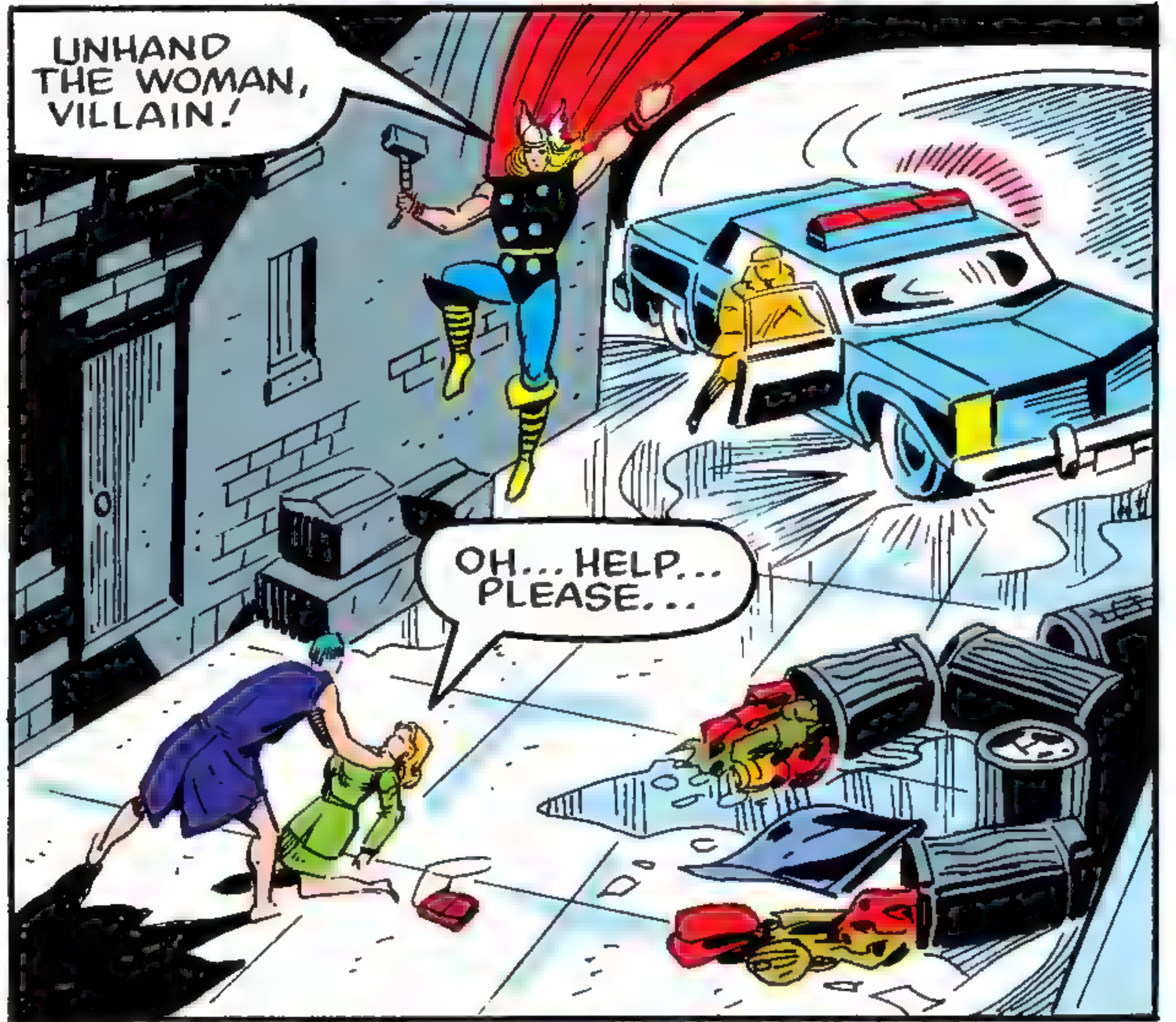
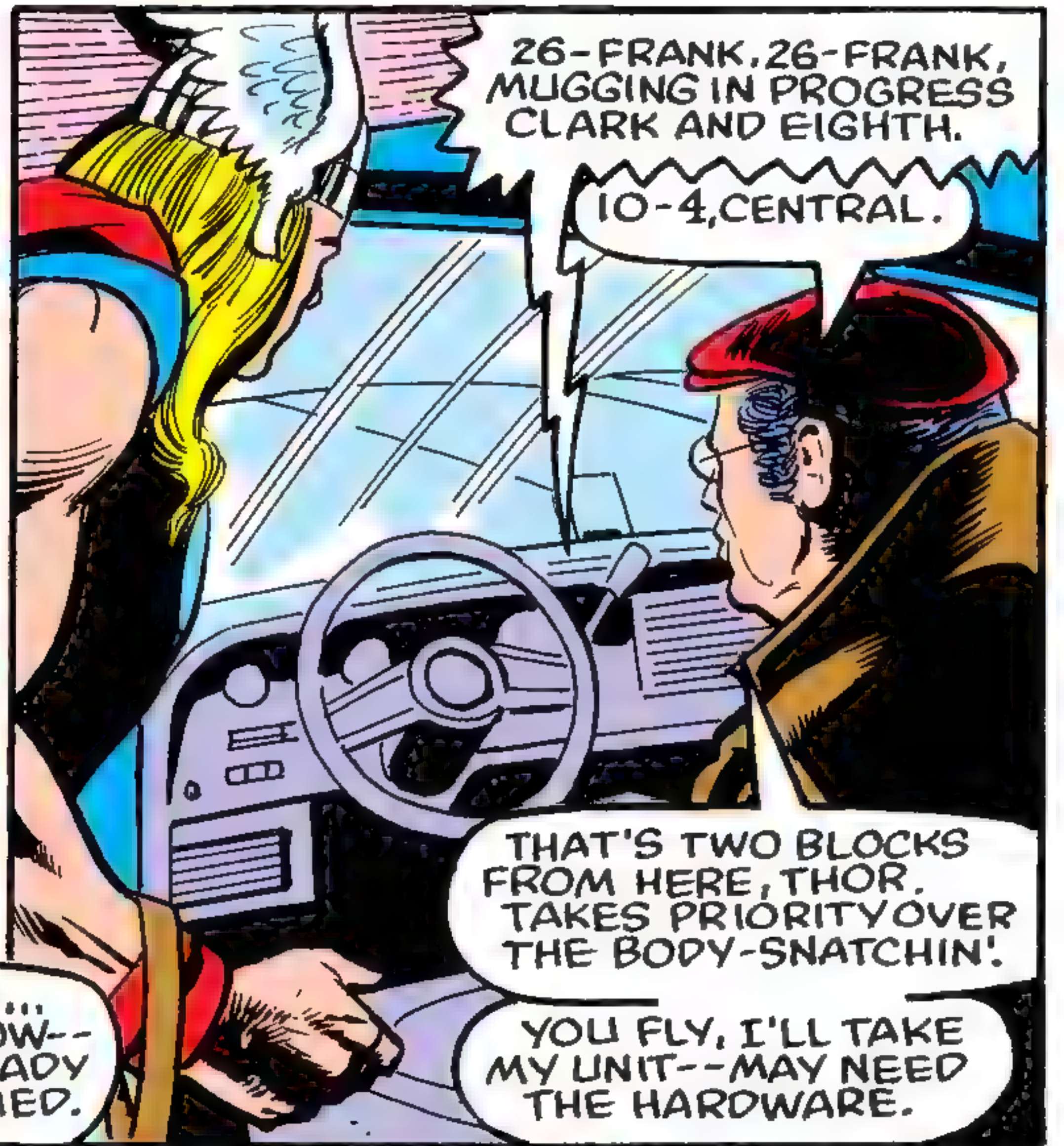
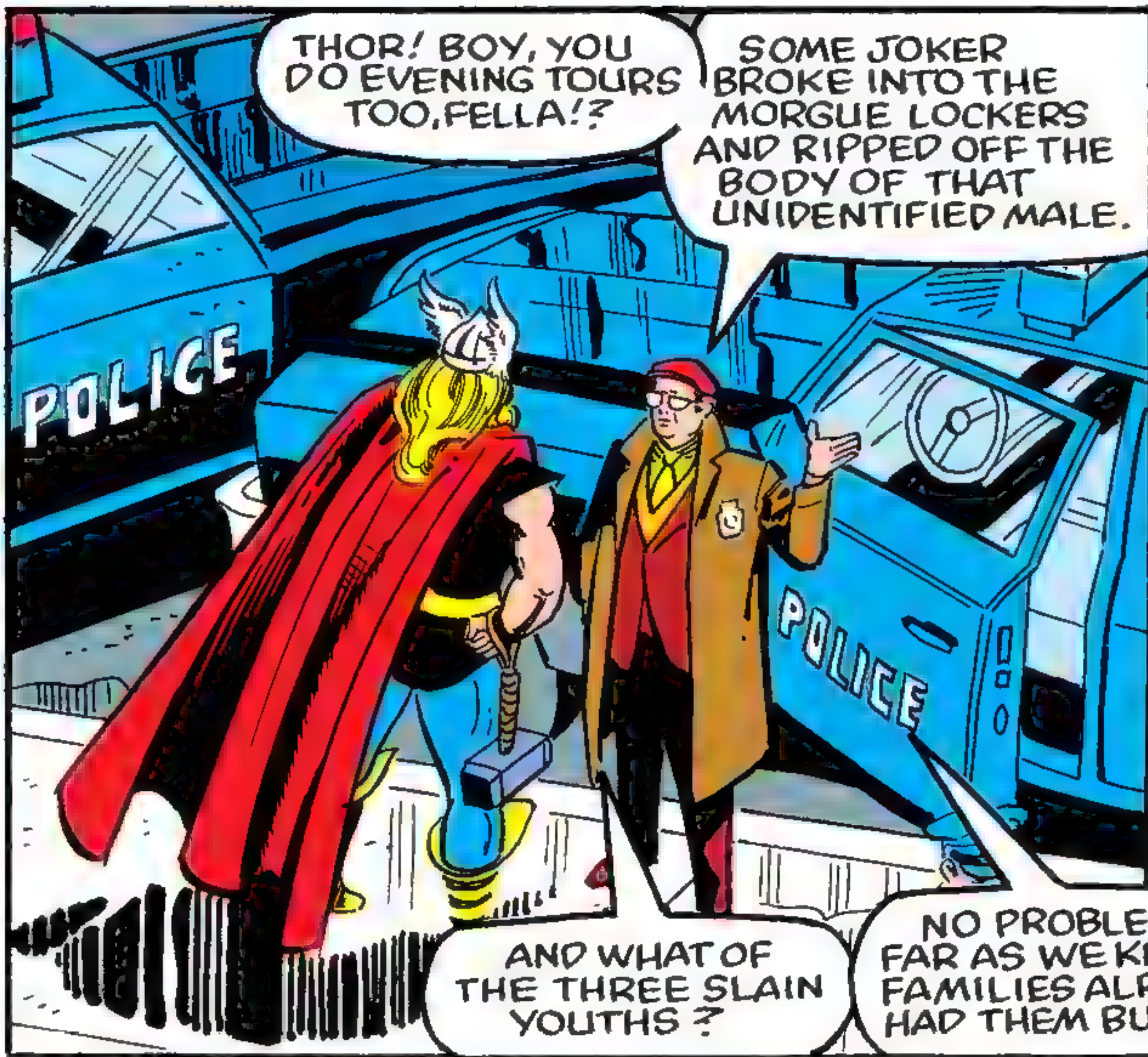
**NEXT MORNING,
COMMUNITY GENERAL
HOSPITAL...**



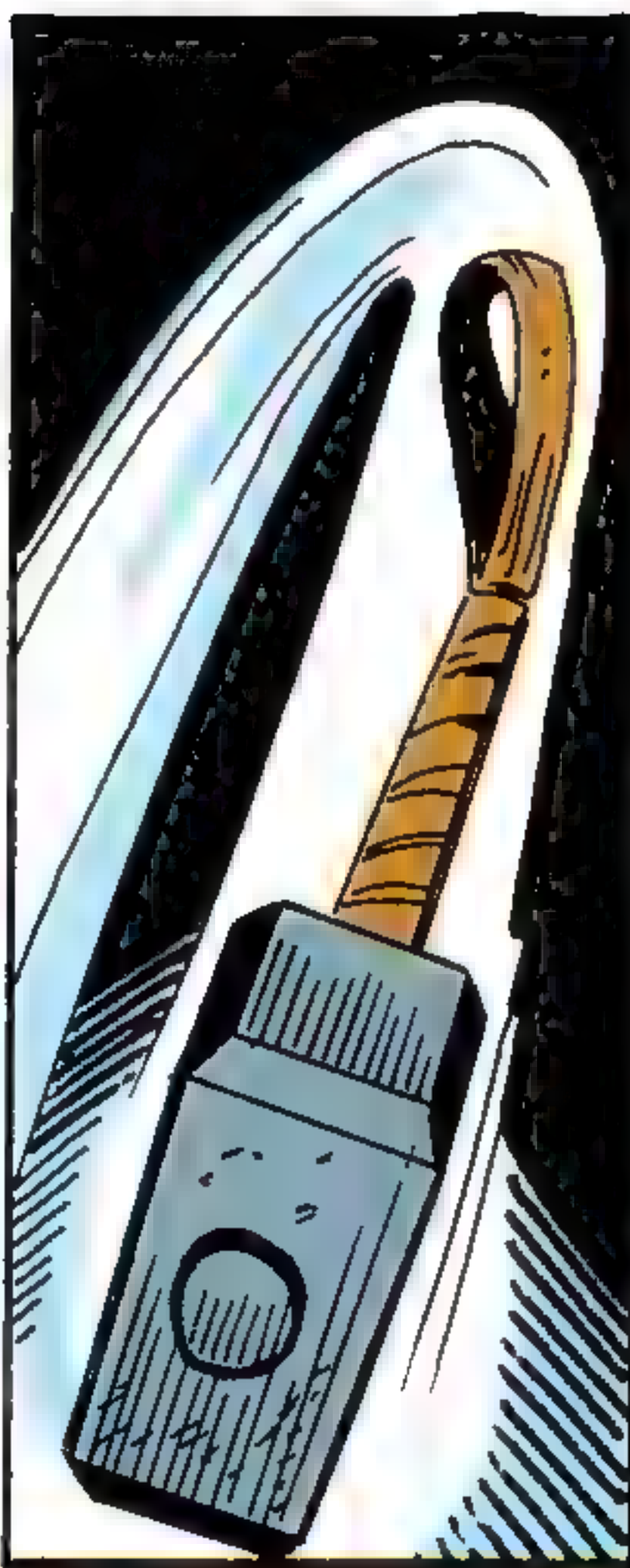








BUT, WITH THE VERY SPEED OF A DEMON, THE LIVING DEAD MAN DODGES THE MIGHTY HAMMER...



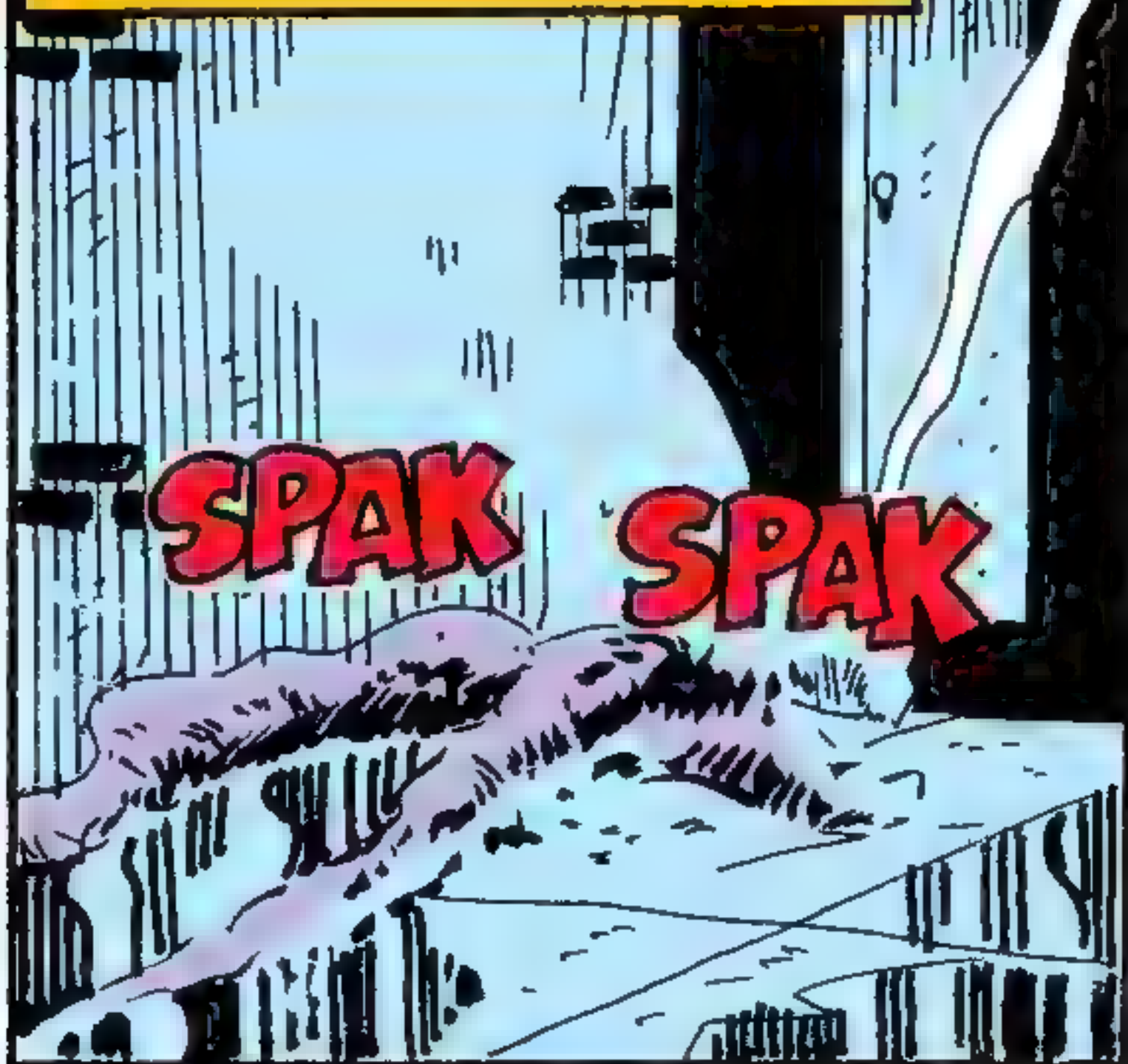
... ONLY TO BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD...

... UPON ITS UNEXPECTED RETURN--



THE ENCHANTED MJOLNIR WAS ONCE A RELIGIOUS RELIC, AND WIELDED BY A STAUNCH BELIEVER IT HAS A PROFOUND EFFECT...

... AS THE MONSTER BURSTS TO FLAME AND ASHENS INTO DUST.



AT THAT MOMENT...



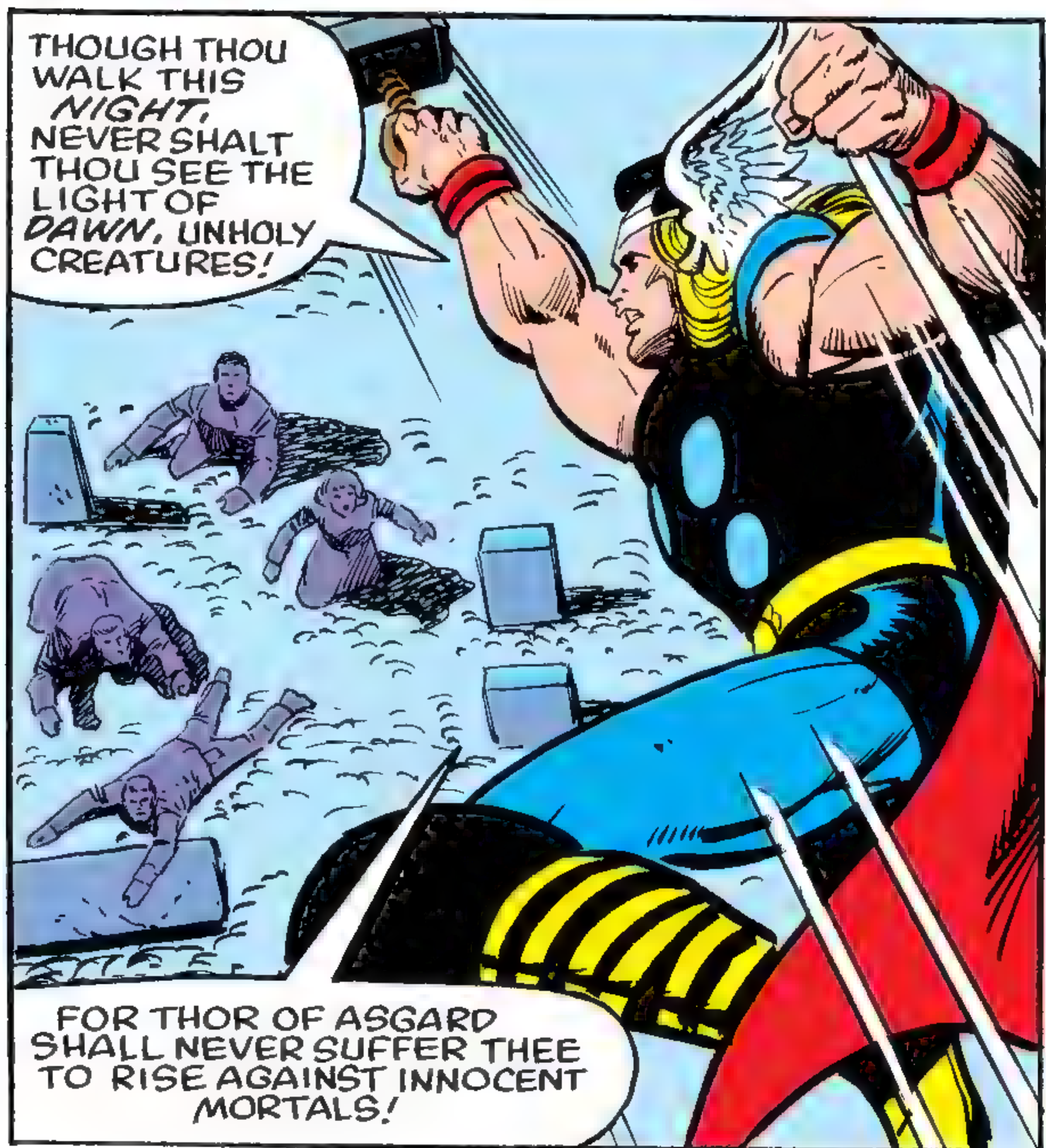
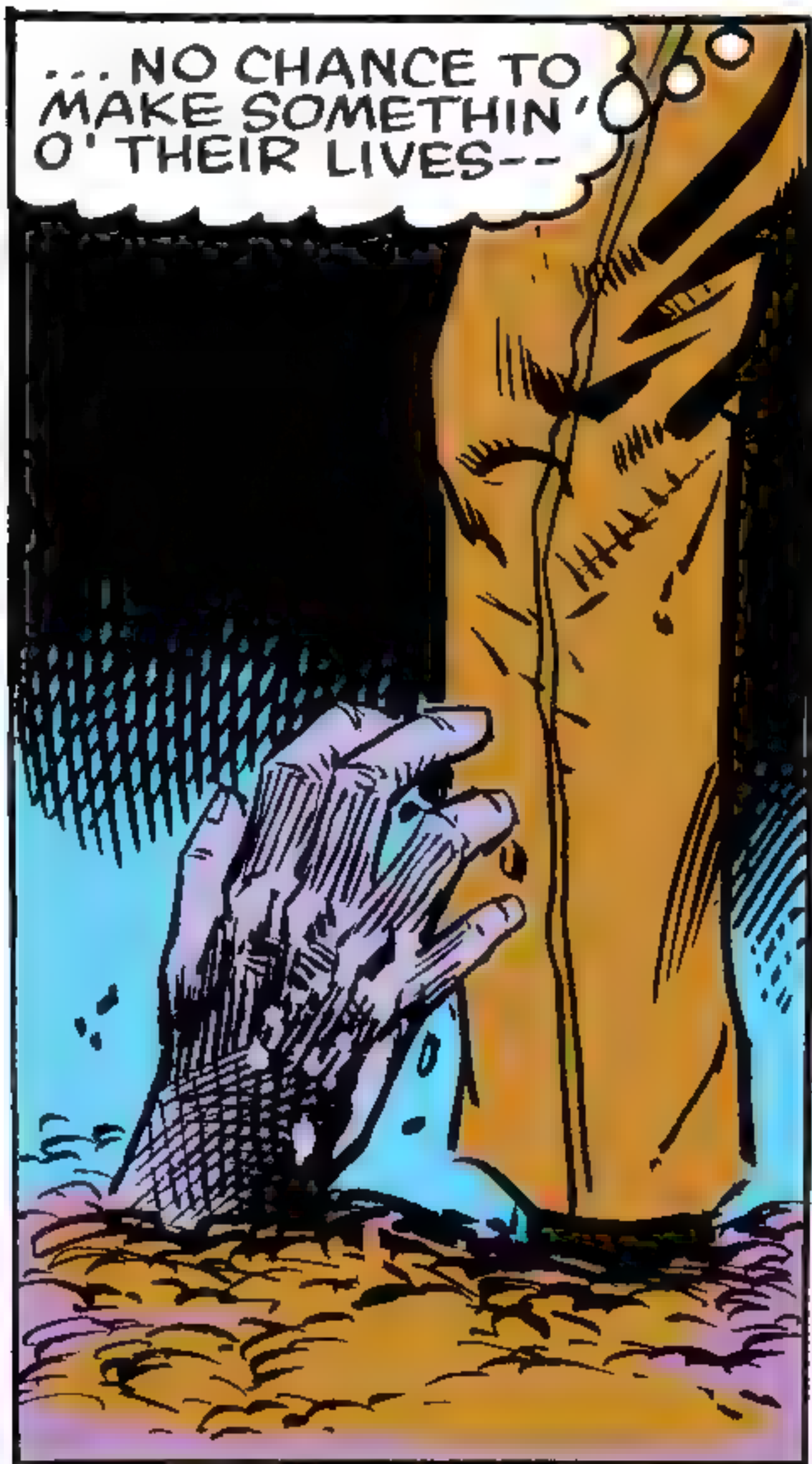
EVERYTHING'S QUIET, POLOWSKI, YOU MUSTA JUST BEEN HEARIN' THINGS AGAIN.

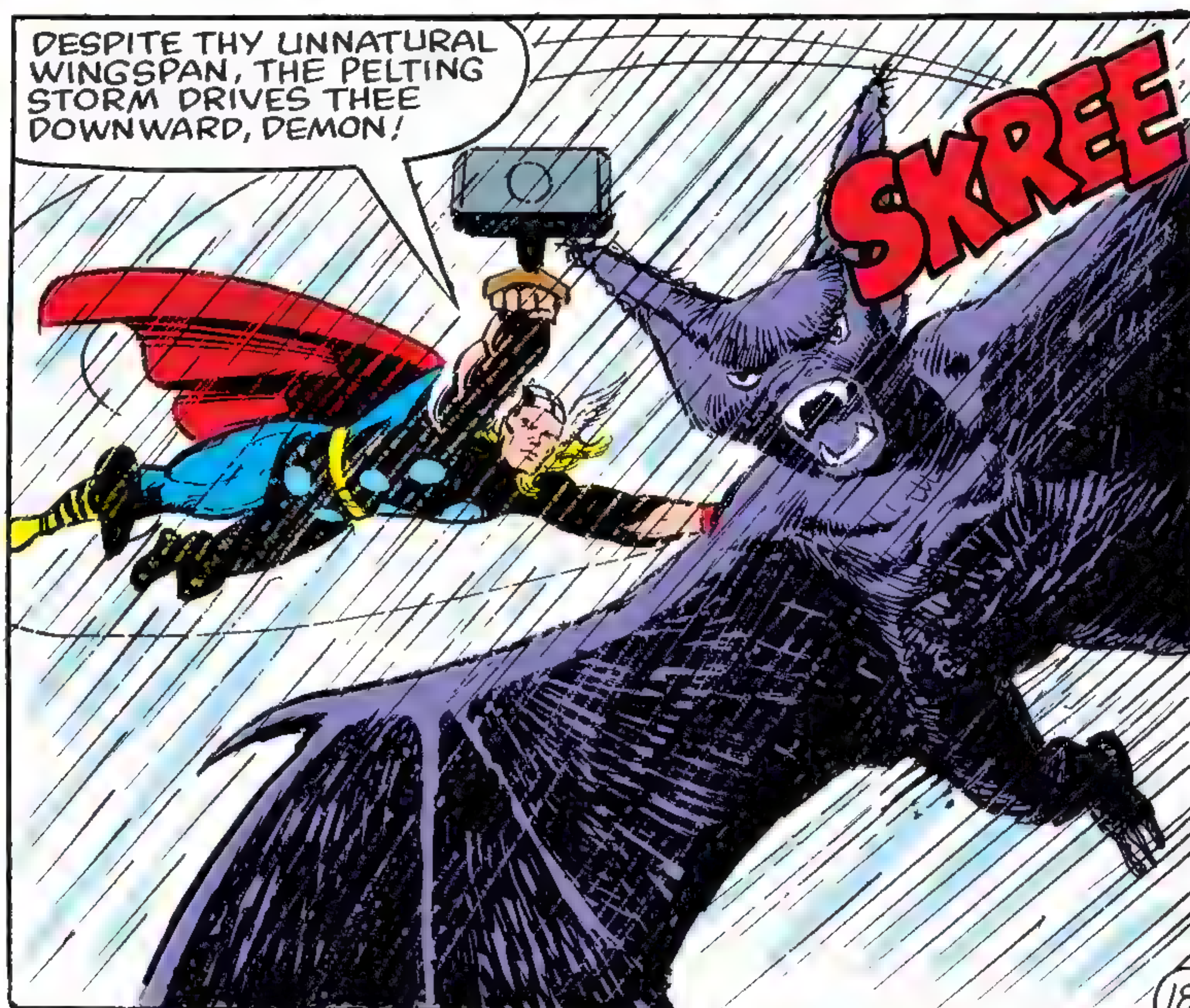
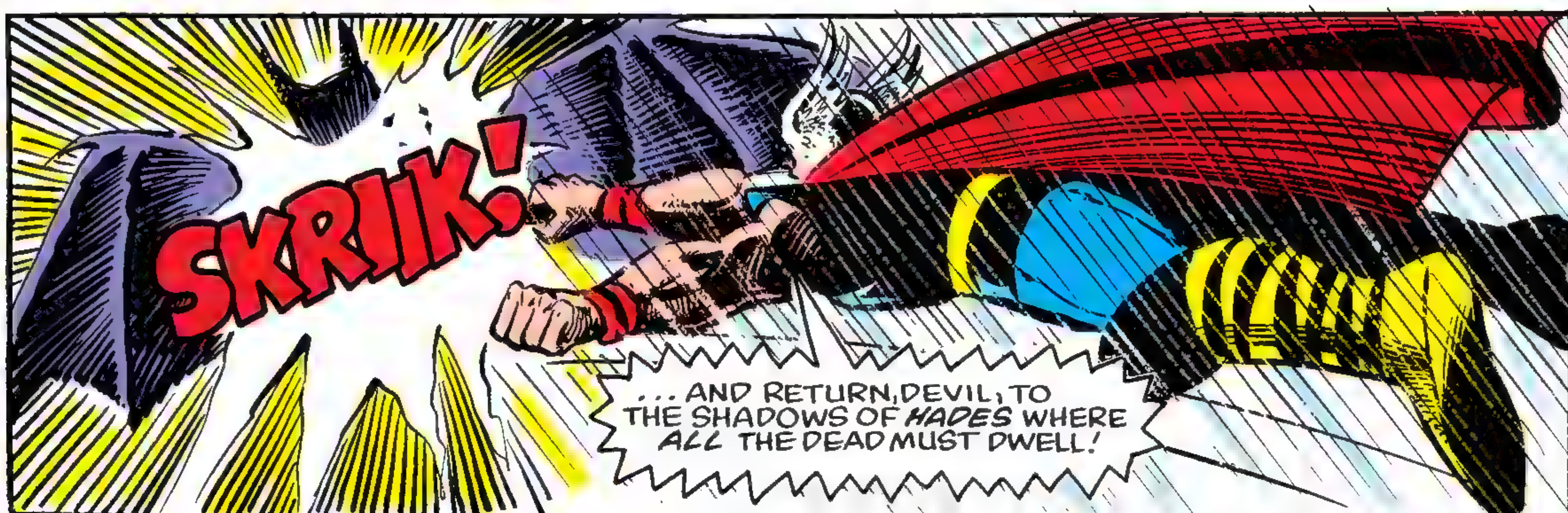
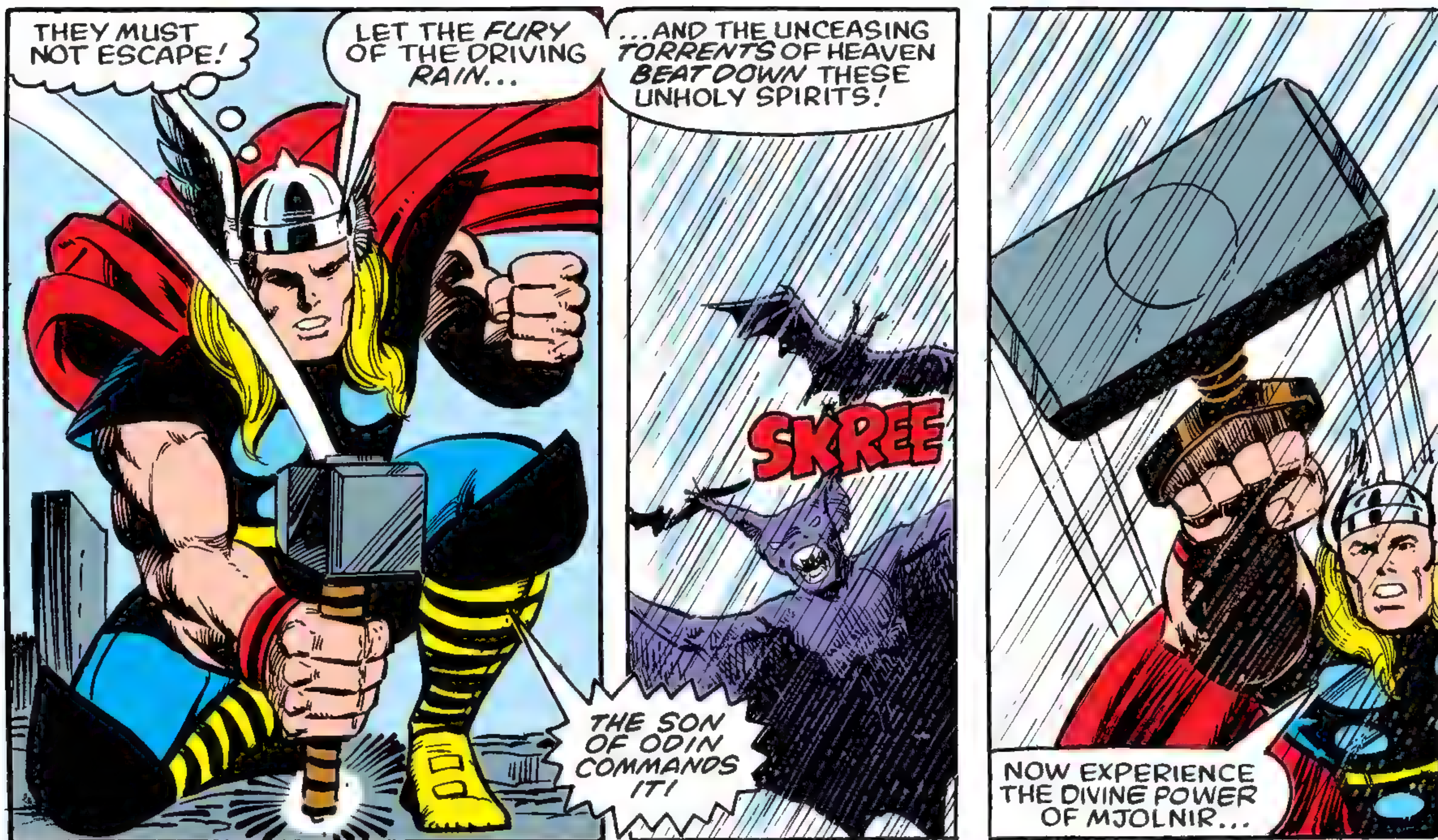


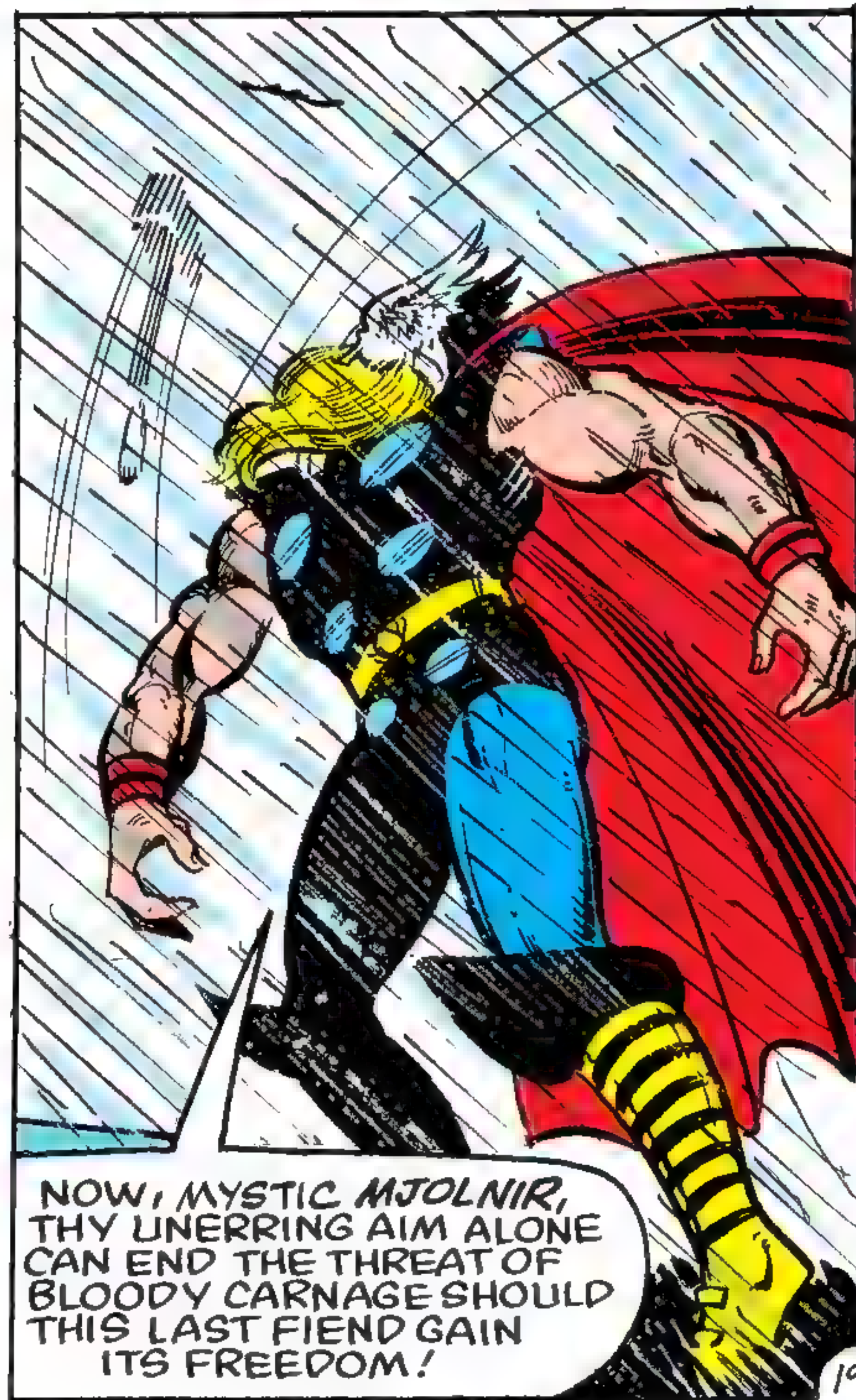
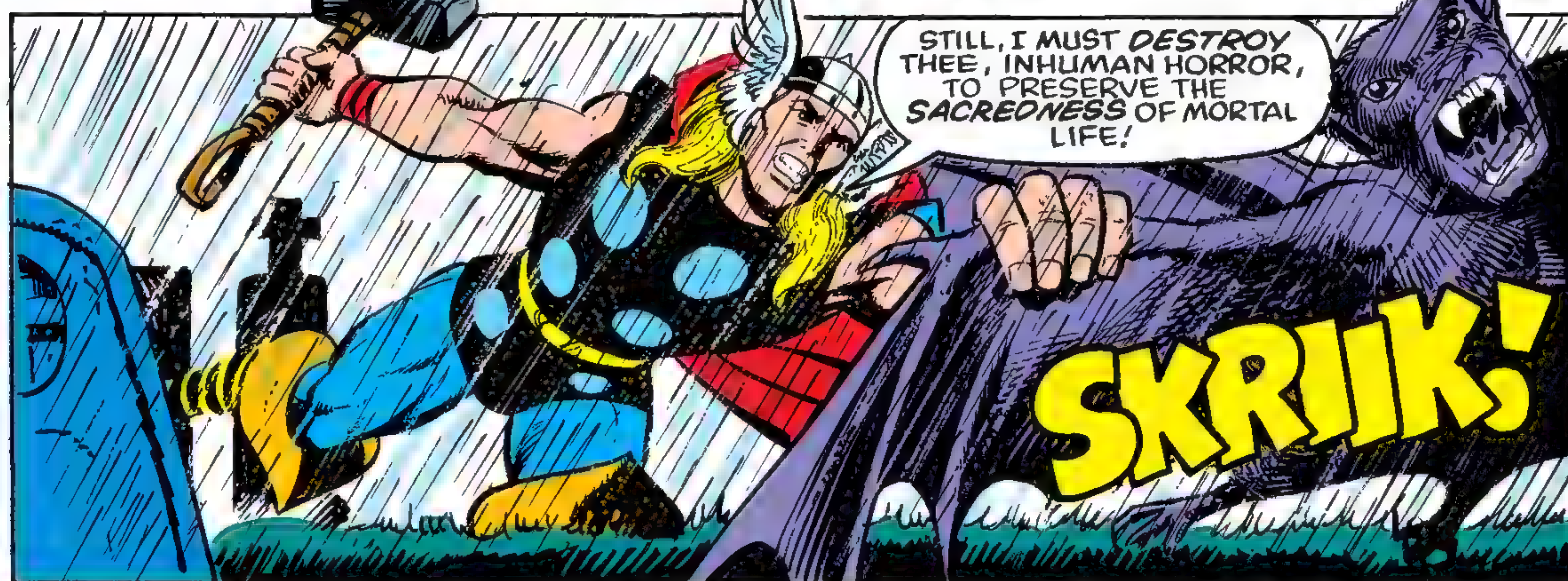
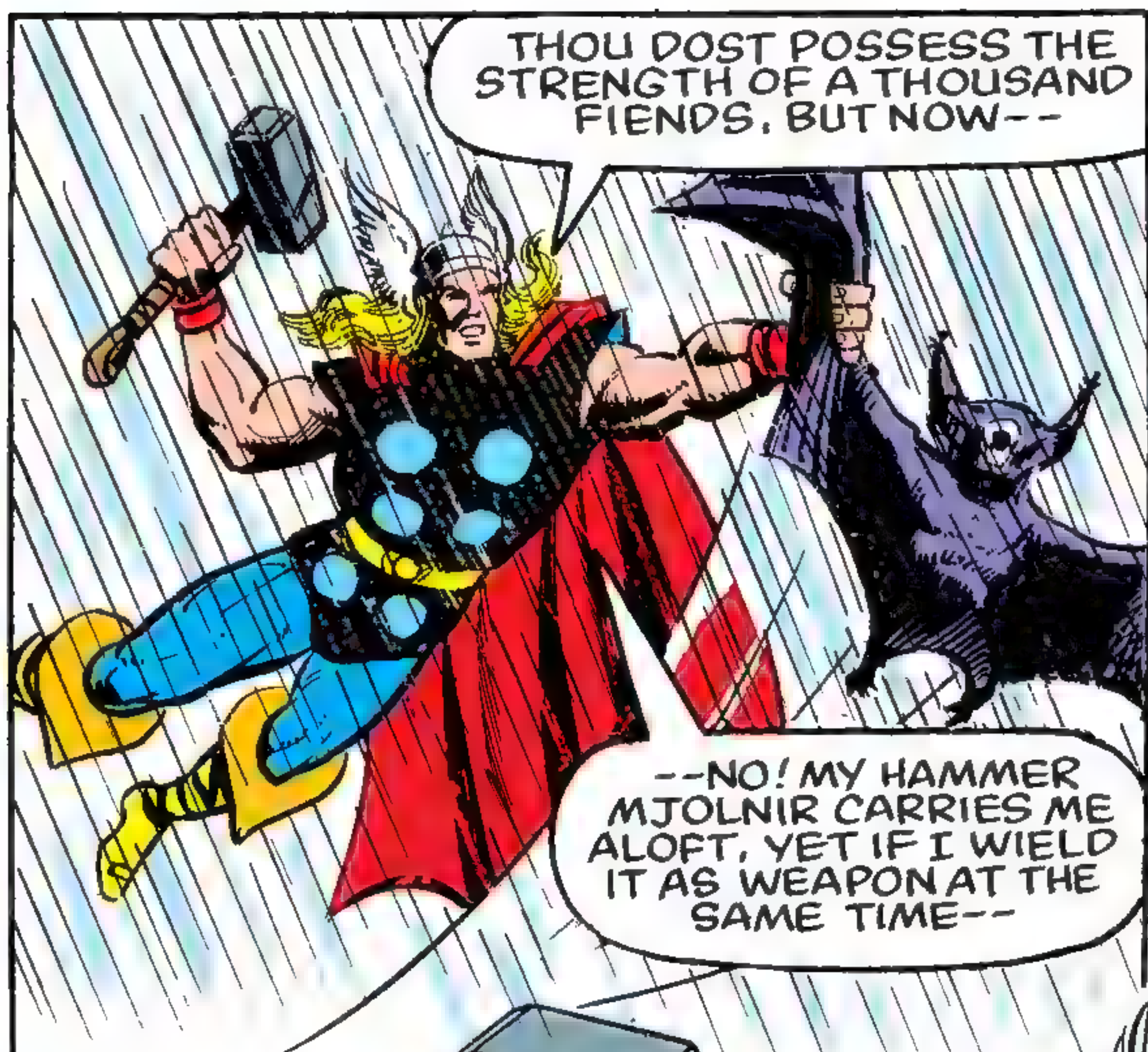
AH, THE POOR KIDS I BURIED YESTERDAY. DON'T MIND SO MUCH PLANTING THE OLD FOLKS-- POLOWSKI SAYS, YA GOTTA KICK SOMETIMES--

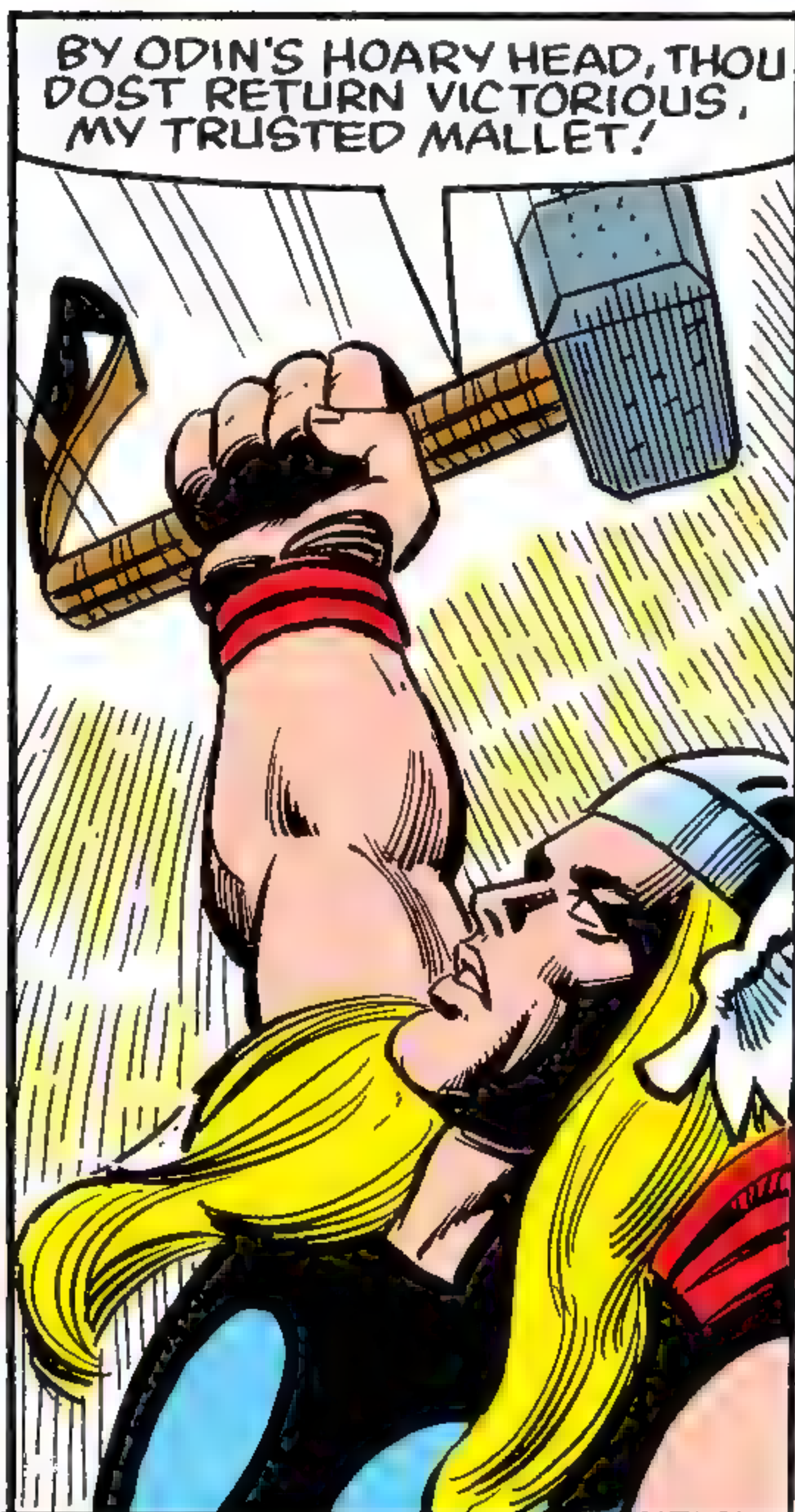
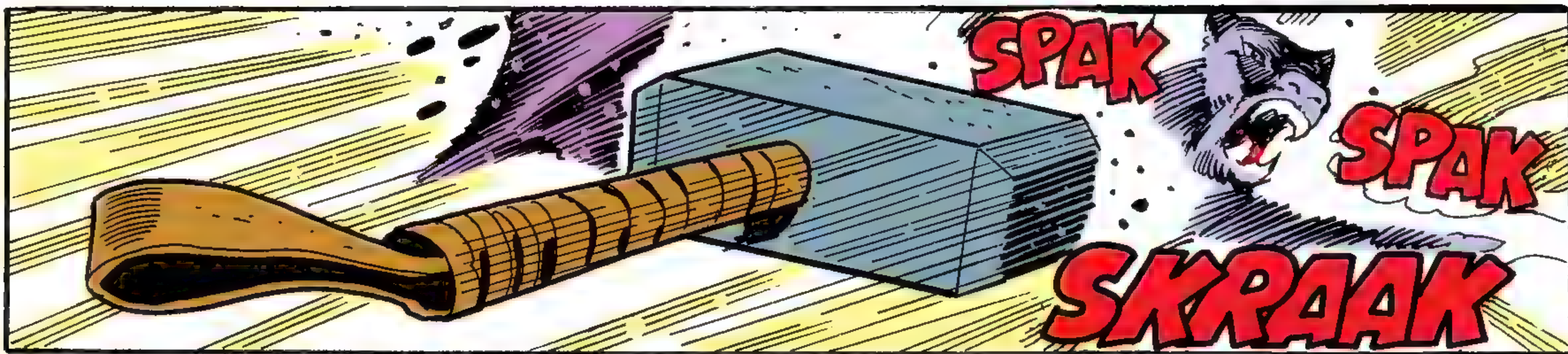
-- BUT NOT EVEN OUTTA HIGH SCHOOL...



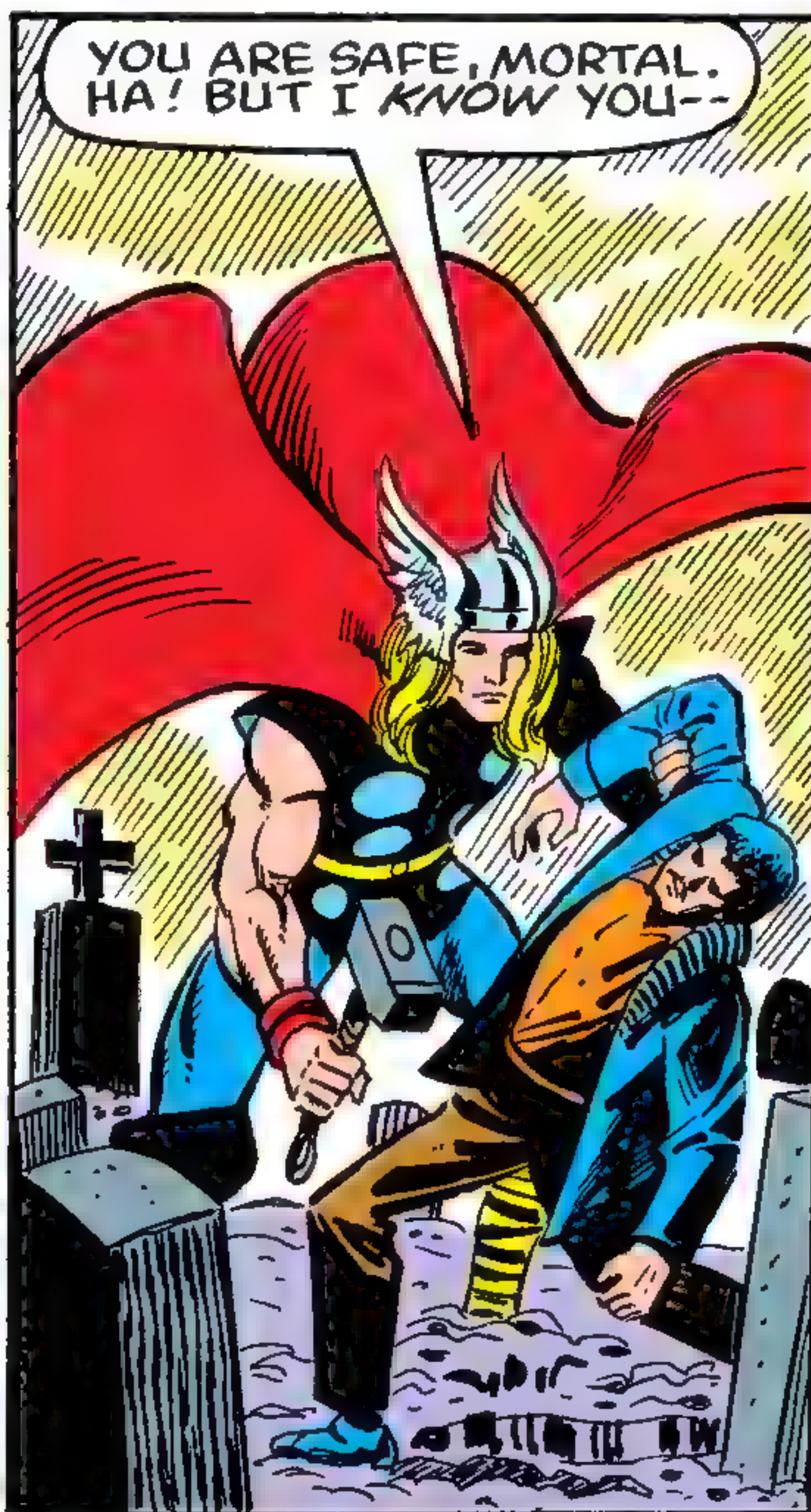








BY ODIN'S HOARY HEAD, THOU
DOST RETURN VICTORIOUS,
MY TRUSTED MALLET!



YOU ARE SAFE, MORTAL.
HA! BUT I KNOW YOU--

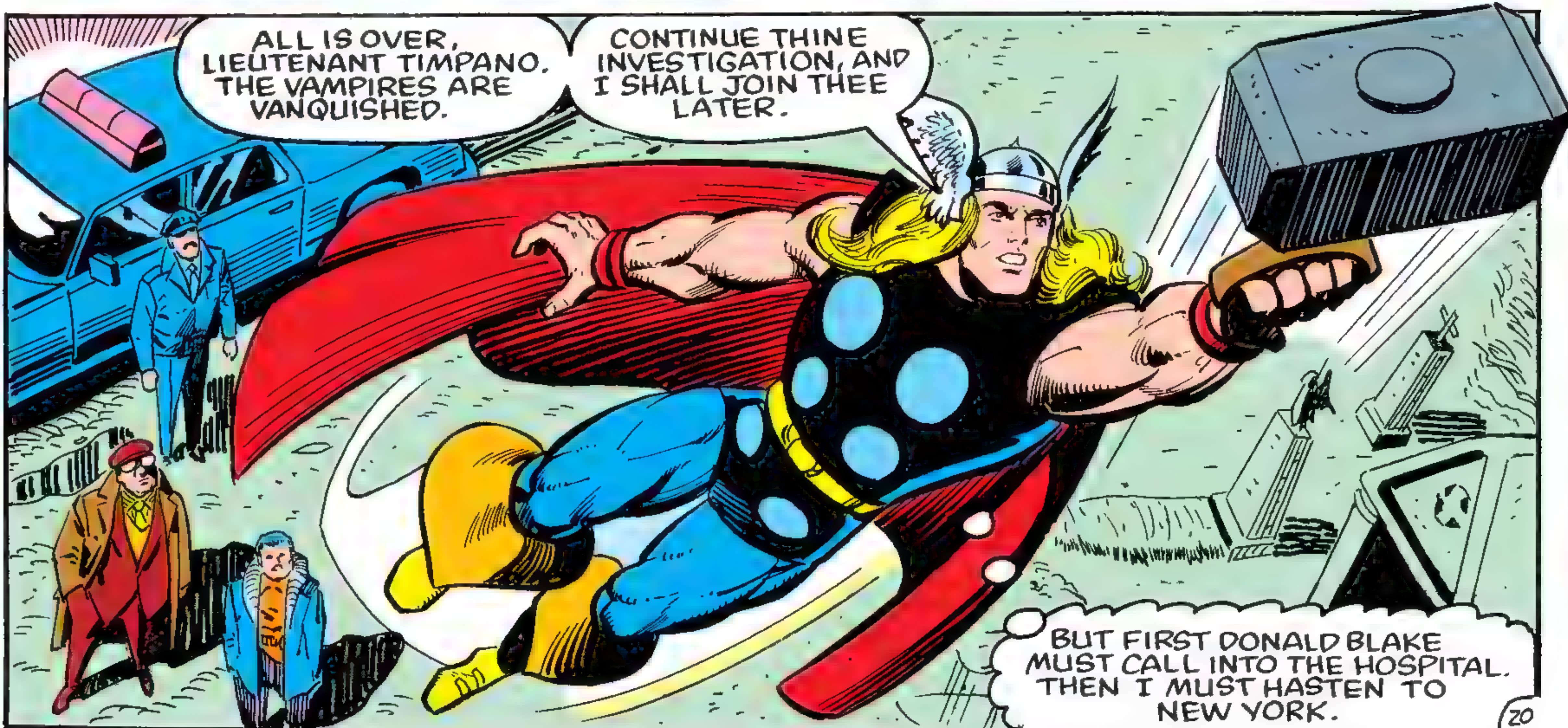


UH, YEAH, WE MET
THE OTHER DAY WHEN
I WAS, UM, KINDA,
ASSISTIN'. YOU MIGHT
SAY, THAT CRUSADER
GUY, BUT--



BYGONES
BE BYGONES,
FRIEND.

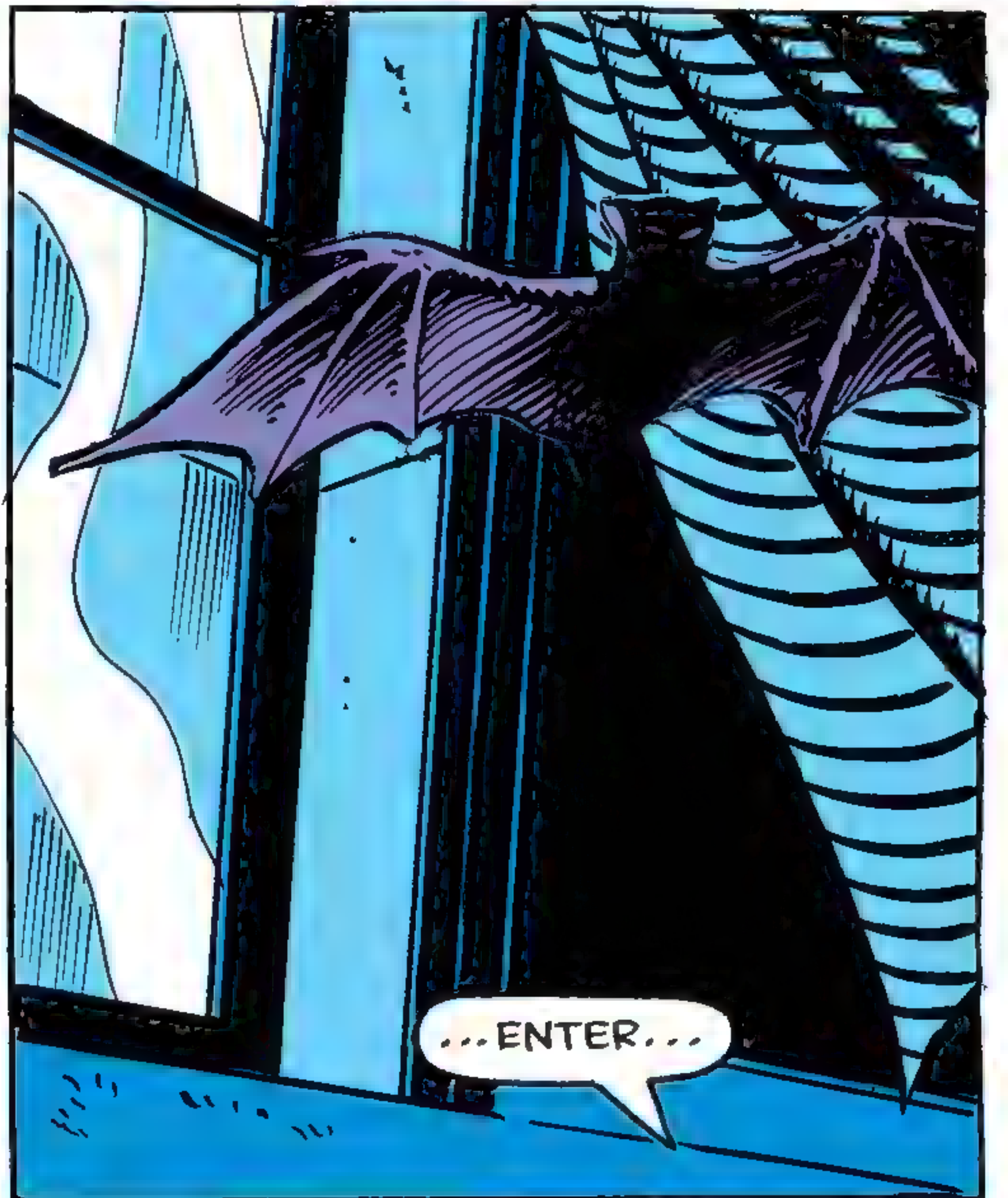
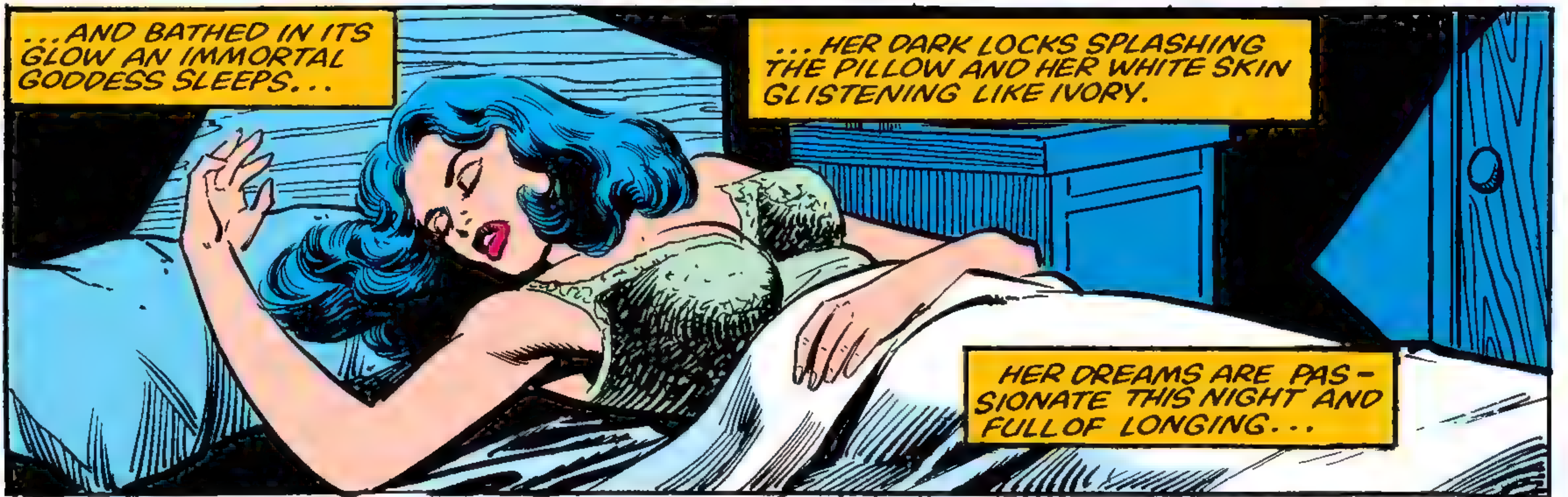
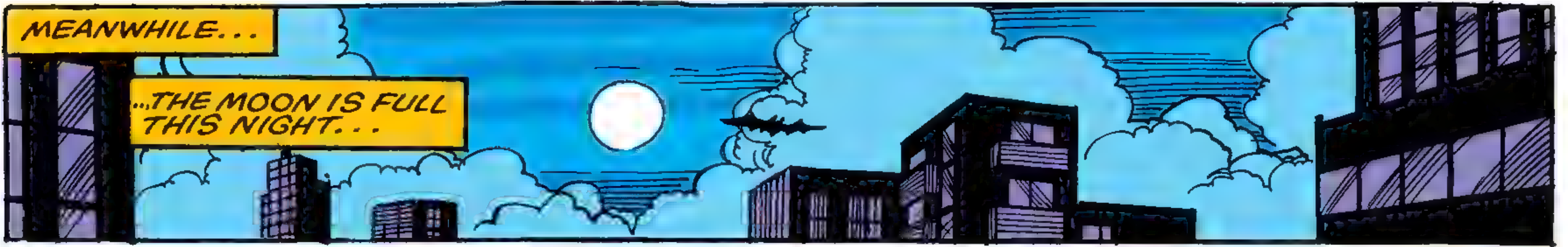
PHEW!
THANKS,
THOR!



ALL IS OVER,
LIEUTENANT TIMPANO.
THE VAMPIRES ARE
VANQUISHED.

CONTINUE THINE
INVESTIGATION, AND
I SHALL JOIN THEE
LATER.

BUT FIRST DONALD BLAKE
MUST CALL INTO THE HOSPITAL.
THEN I MUST HASTEN TO
NEW YORK.

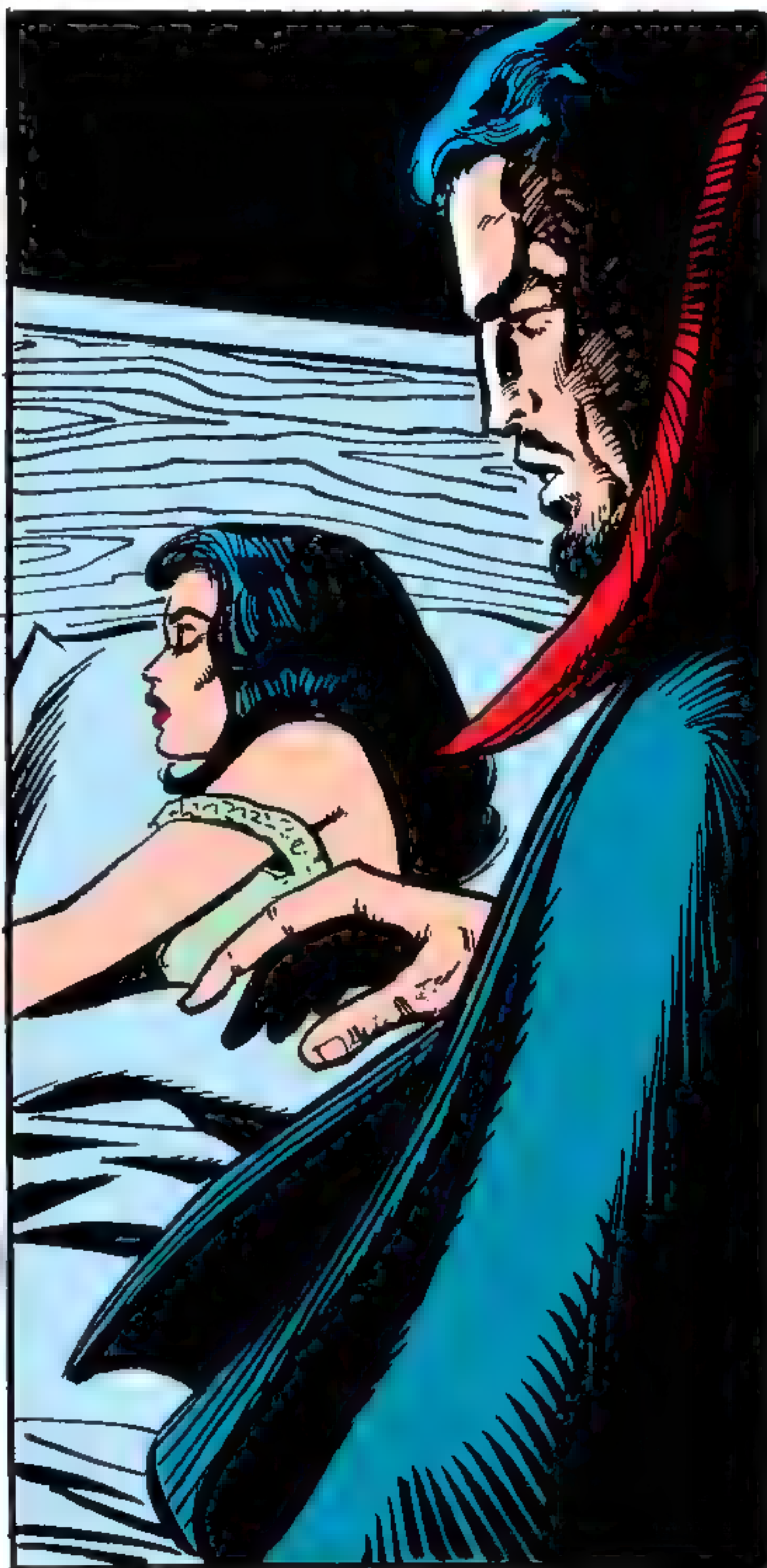


THE MOON IS FULL
THIS NIGHT...



...AND BATHED IN ITS GLOW
AN EVIL TRANSFORMATION
TAKES PLACE...

SUDDENLY, A FIGURE AS
MAJESTIC AS IT IS MALE-
VOLENT, AS COMELY AS
IT IS CRUEL...



...BENDS OVER SIF'S GRACEFUL,
SLEEPING FORM AND LIFTS HER
GENTLY TO HIS LIPS...



MY RAVISHING
GODDESS! NOW YOU
ARE MINE!



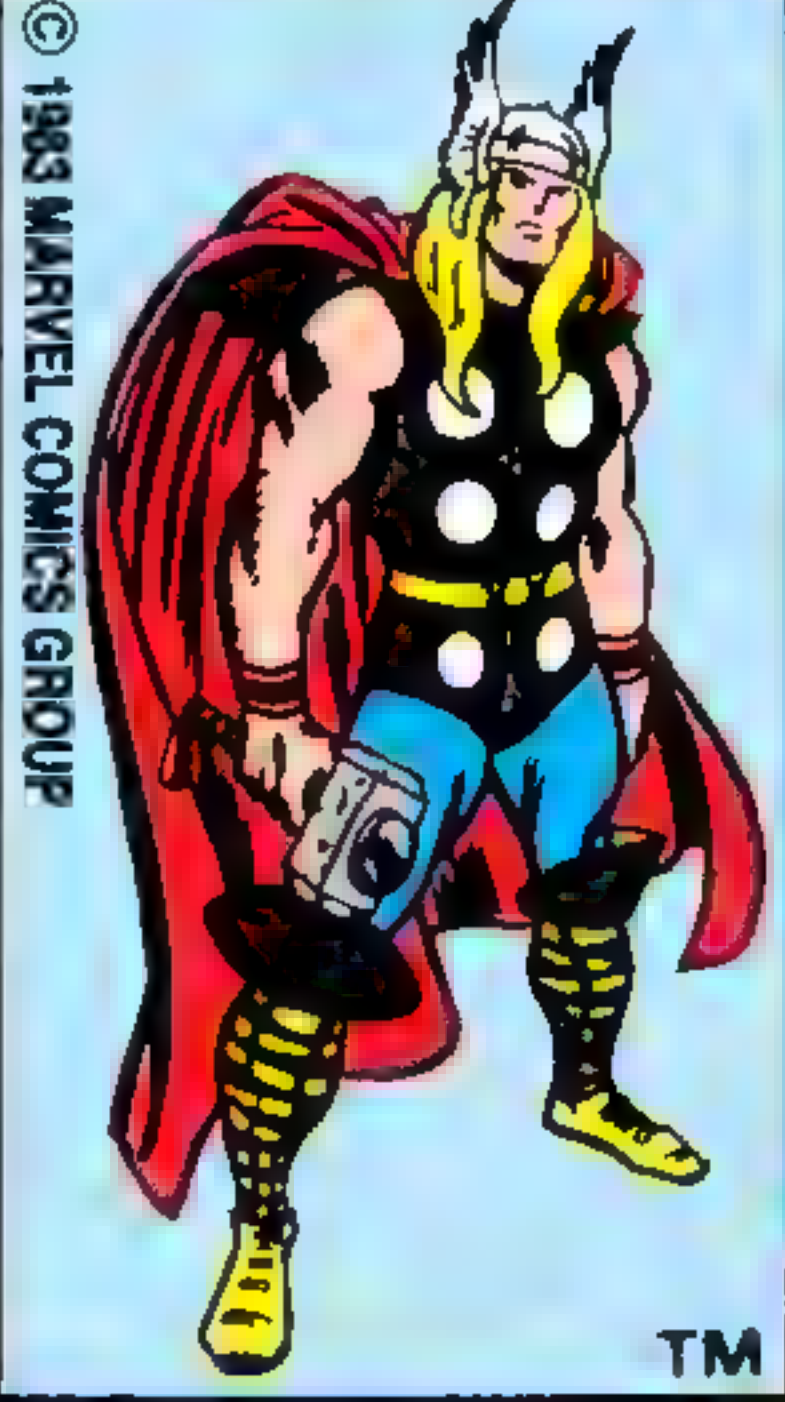
NEXT

THE PRINCE OF
ASGARD **VERSUS** THE PRINCE OF
DARKNESS!

60¢ 333
JULY
02450

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



THE MIGHTY THOR

AT
DRACULA'S
COMMAND...



Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**

...LIKE A BAT OUT OF HEAVEN!

DRACULA
BIDS YOU AWAKEN,
MY GODDESS!



ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPTER

MARK BRIGHT
PENCILER

VINCE COLLETTA
INKER

JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER

GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



HUHHM...
WHO---?

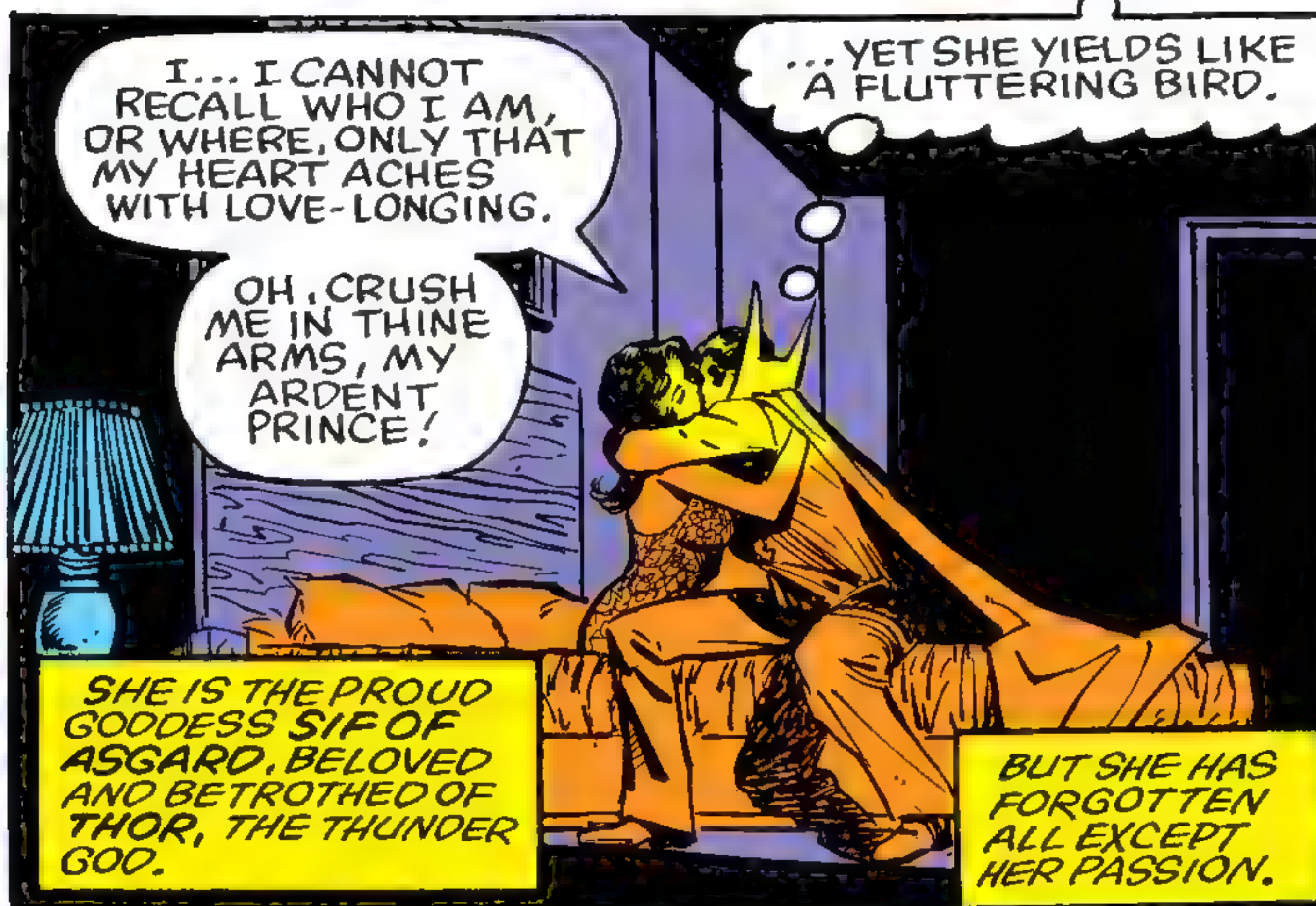
I AM YOUR
PRINCE. YOU ARE
MY BRIDE.

THE BLOOD OF THIS GODDESS
SURGES THROUGH MY BEING.
I FEEL MORE POWERFUL THAN
EVER IN THE LONG CENTURIES
OF MY EXISTENCE!



WOULD YOU NOT GAZE
INTO THE EYES OF YOUR
BELOVED?

HER WILL
IS STRONG,
HER MIND
AT LEAST
AS GREAT
AS MY
OWN...



I... I CANNOT
RECALL WHO I AM,
OR WHERE, ONLY THAT
MY HEART ACHES
WITH LOVE-LONGING.

OH, CRUSH
ME IN THINE
ARMS, MY
ARDENT
PRINCE!

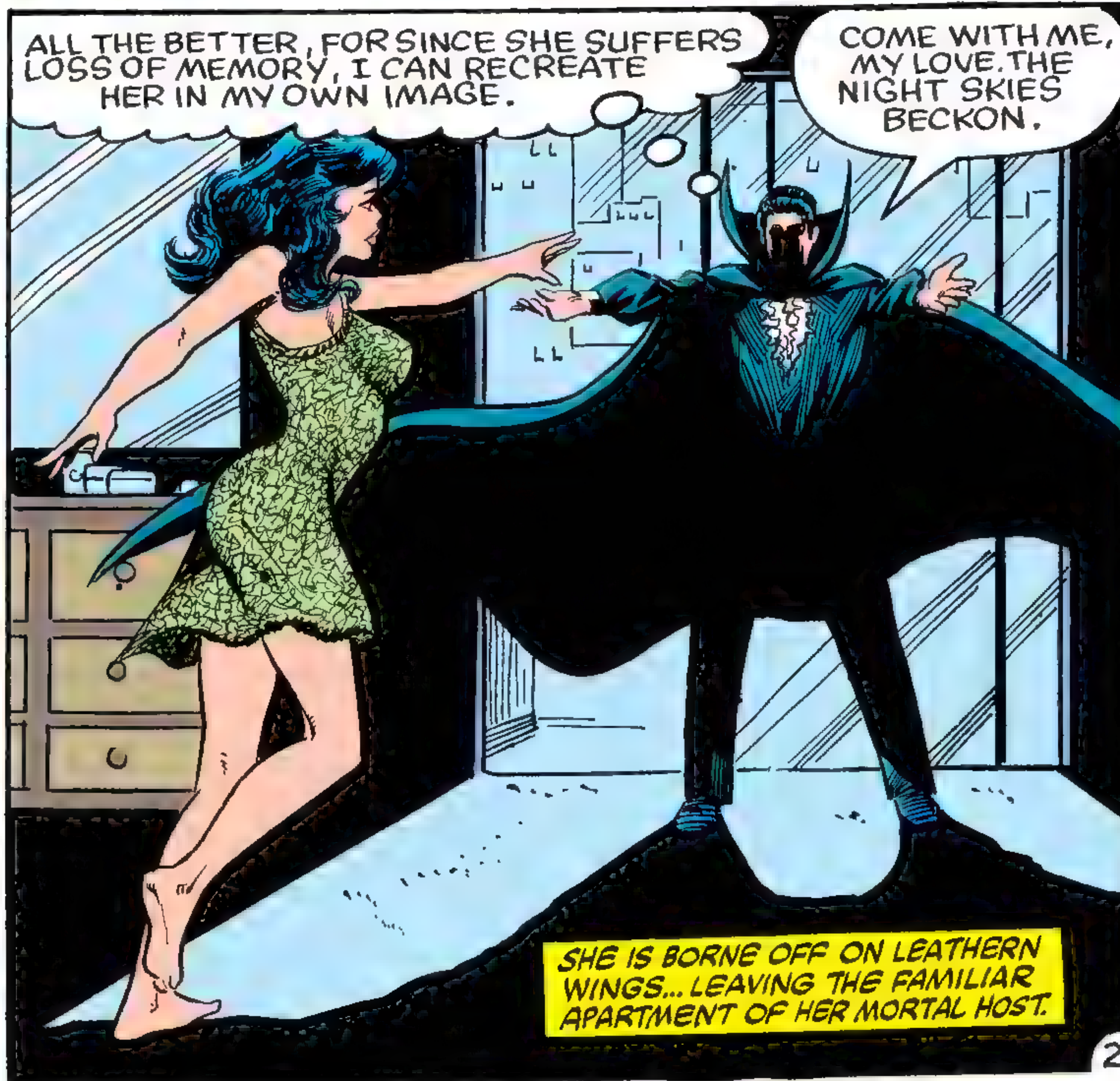
... YET SHE YIELDS LIKE
A FLUTTERING BIRD.

SHE IS THE PROUD
GODDESS SIF OF
ASSGARD, BELOVED
AND BETROTHED OF
THOR, THE THUNDER
GOD.

BUT SHE HAS
FORGOTTEN
ALL EXCEPT
HER PASSION.



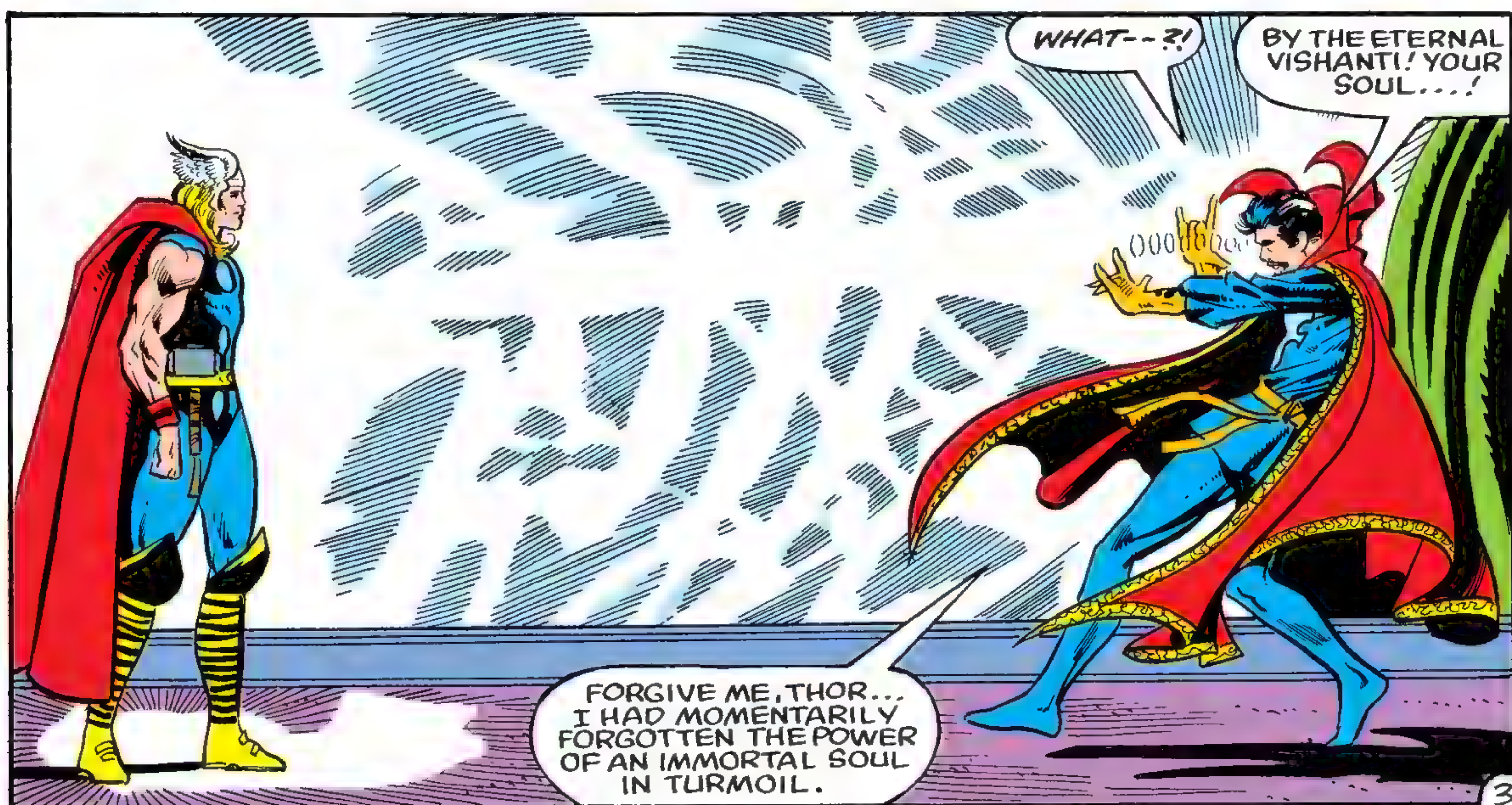
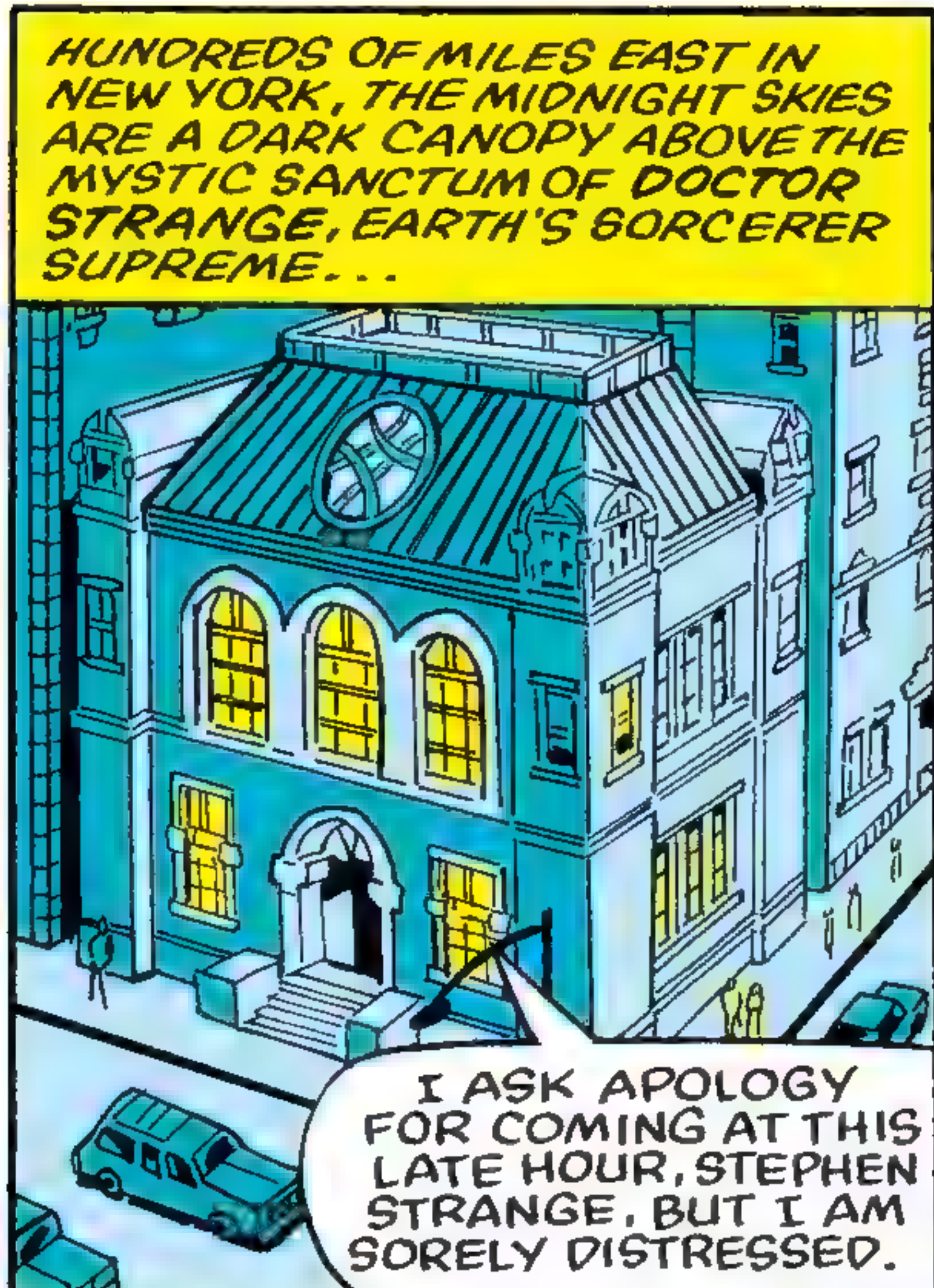
HOW STRANGE--TOTAL AMNESIA
FROM MY SHARING HER BLOOD,
A UNIQUE REACTION OF HER
GODLY NATURE.



ALL THE BETTER, FOR SINCE SHE SUFFERS
LOSS OF MEMORY, I CAN RECREATE
HER IN MY OWN IMAGE.

COME WITH ME,
MY LOVE. THE
NIGHT SKIES
BECKON.

SHE IS BORNE OFF ON LEATHERN
WINGS... LEAVING THE FAMILIAR
APARTMENT OF HER MORTAL HOST.





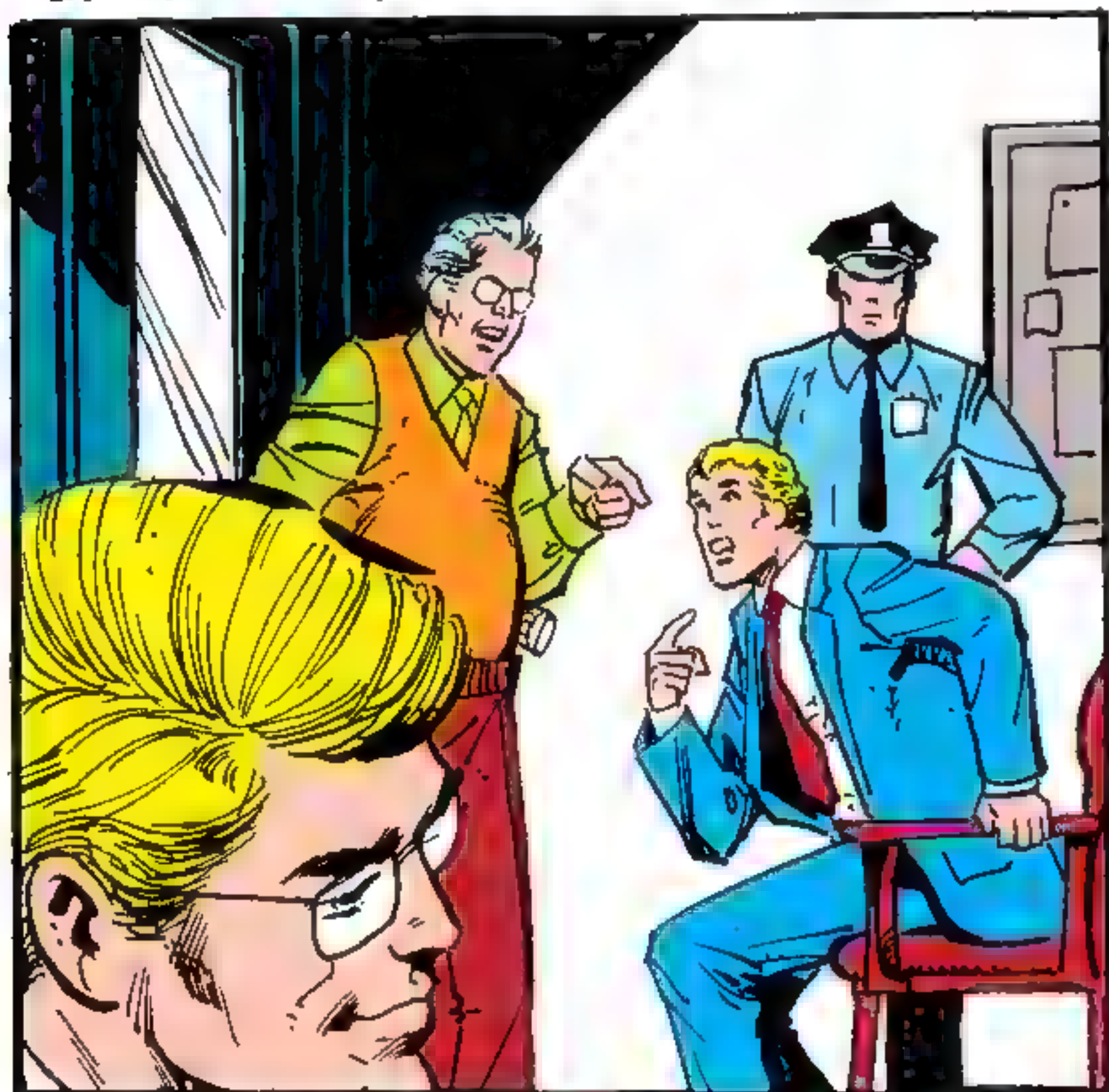
YOU WERE WISE TO SEEK MY AID.

THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO REVEALS TO ME THE GRAVITY OF YOUR SITUATION.

"YOU HAVE A HUMAN ALTER EGO, A PHYSICIAN NAMED DONALD BLAKE, WHO HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF MURDERING A NURSE AND EX-LOVER, JANE FOSTER.

"IN TRUTH, JANE FOSTER FELL FATALLY ILL ONE DAY...

"... BY MEANS OF THE RUNE-STAFF OF KAMO THARNN.



"BUT IT IS A FALSE ACCUSATION, THOUGH JANE FOSTER'S FIANCE, DR. KEITH KINCAID, SINCERELY BELIEVES IT AND THUS ATTEMPTS TO PRESS LEGAL CHARGES AGAINST BLAKE.



"...AND WAS ONLY SAVED BY THE GODDESS SIF, WHO TRANSFERRED HER OWN DIVINE ENERGY INTO JANE...



"BUT UPON HER RETURN TO ASGARD IN JANE'S BODY, SIF REVERTED TO HER OWN FORM, AND THE BODY AND SPIRIT OF JANE FOSTER HAVE SINCE DISAPPEARED.



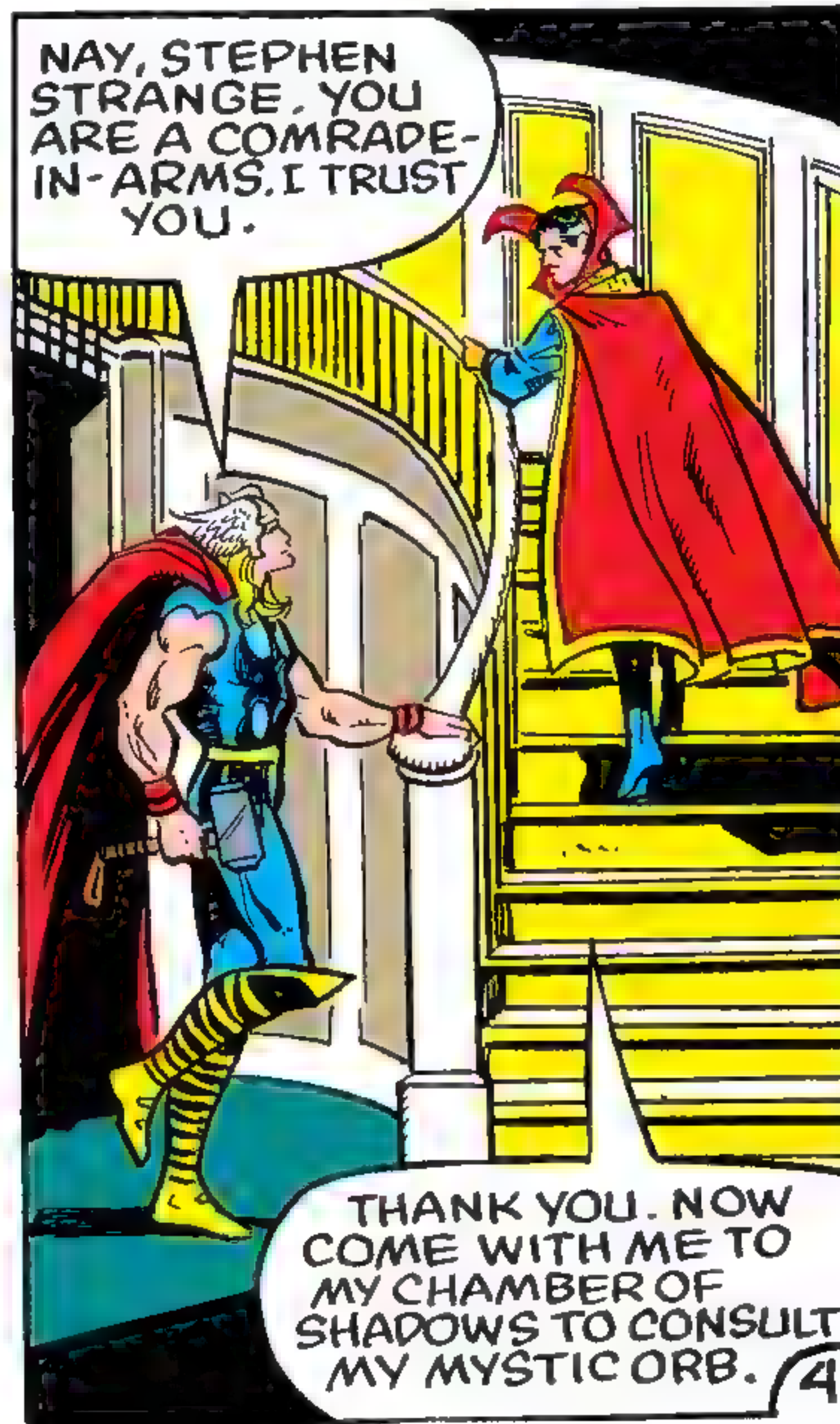
YOU SEEK TO PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF YOUR DONALD BLAKE IDENTITY BY LOCATING THE RUNE-STAFF, WHICH WAS LOST...

...AND WITH IT, HOPEFULLY RECOVERING JANE FOSTER.

AHE, NOW YOU KNOW THE THUNDER GOD'S SECRET.

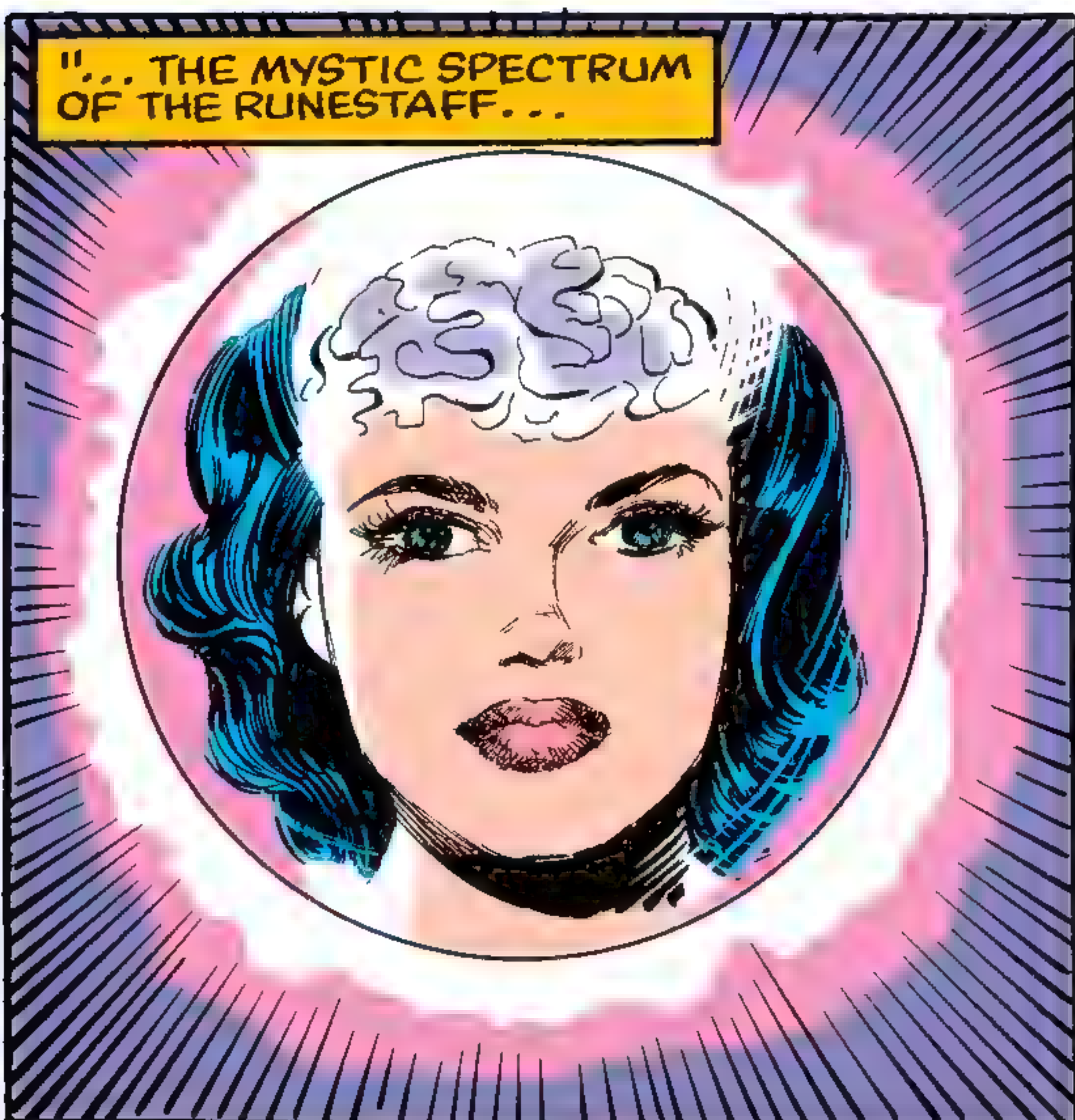
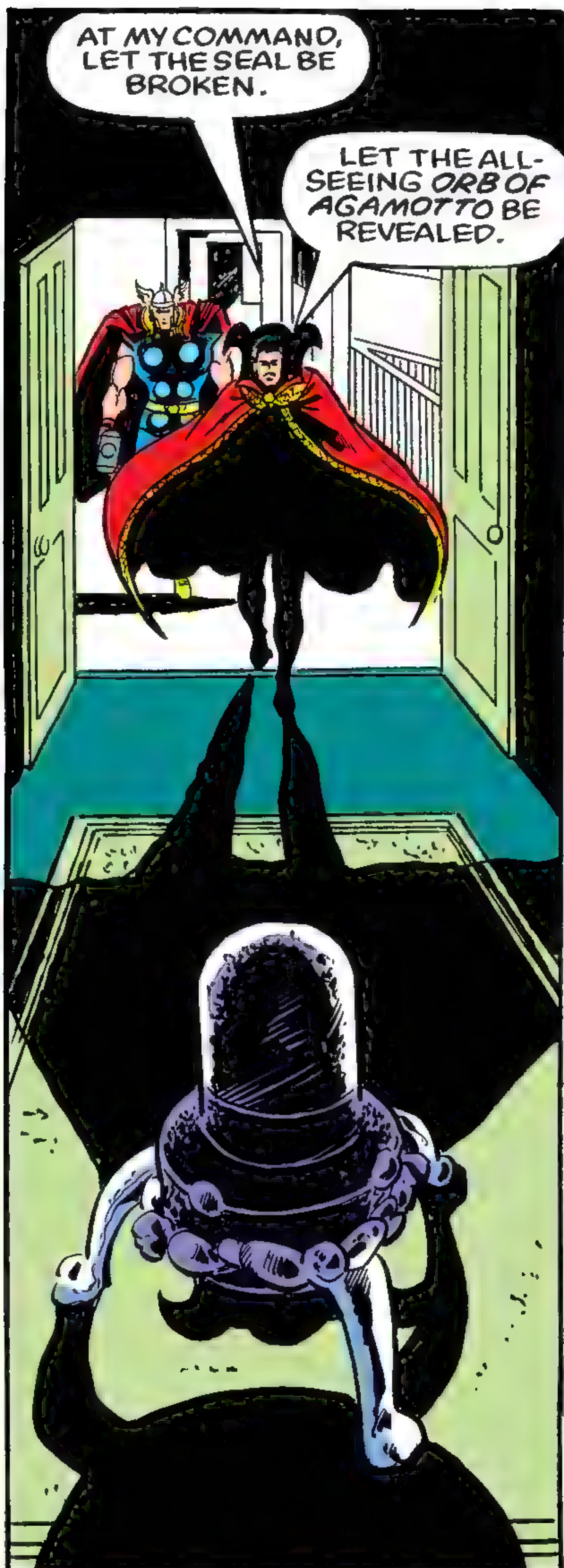
BELIEVE ME, THOR, YOUR IDENTITY IS SAFE WITH ME.

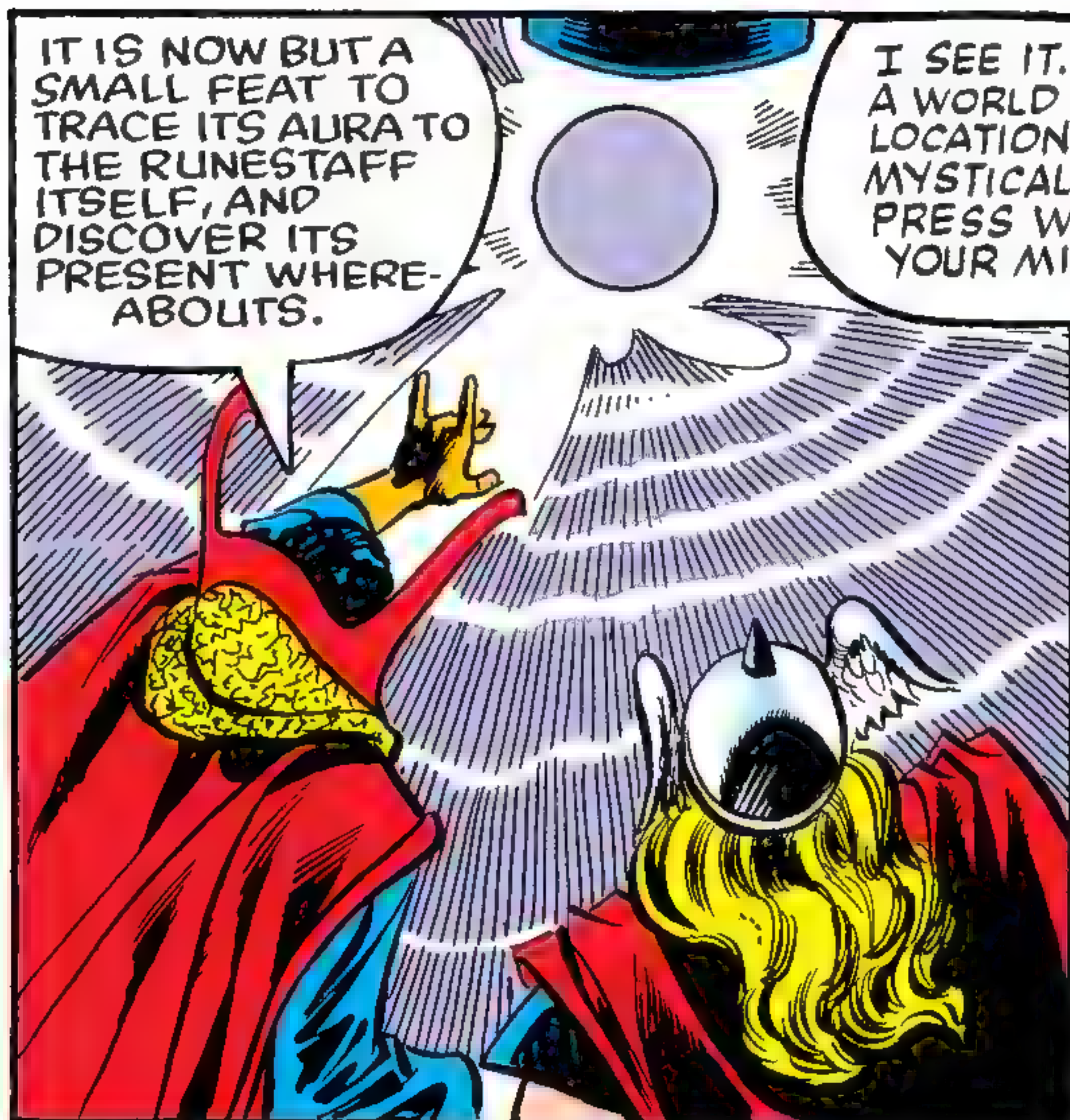
IF IT WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL MORE SECURE, THOUGH, I COULD CAST A SPELL OF SELF-FORGETFULNESS UPON MYSELF--



NAY, STEPHEN STRANGE. YOU ARE A COMRADE-IN-ARMS. I TRUST YOU.

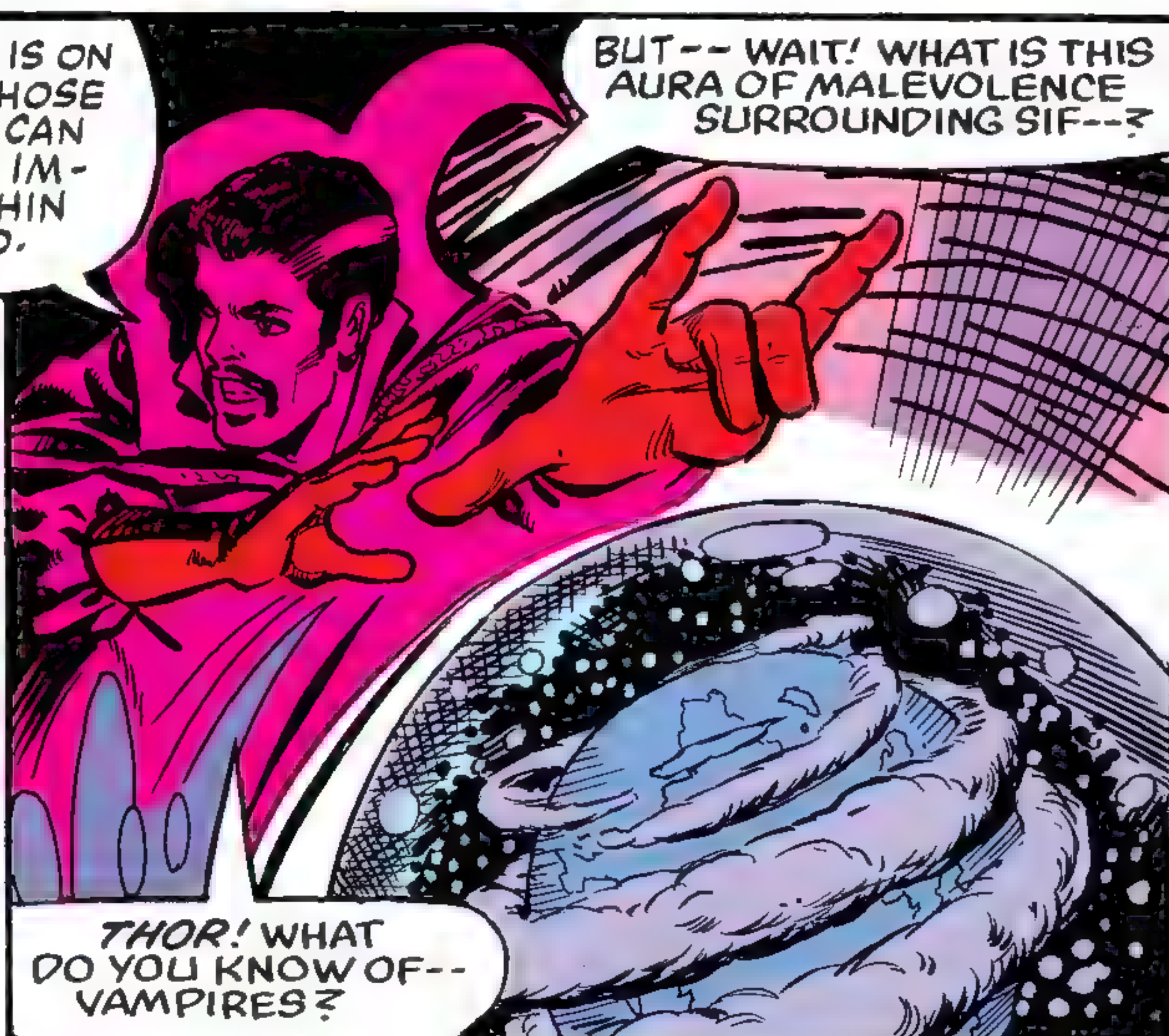
THANK YOU. NOW COME WITH ME TO MY CHAMBER OF SHADOWS TO CONSULT MY MYSTIC ORB.





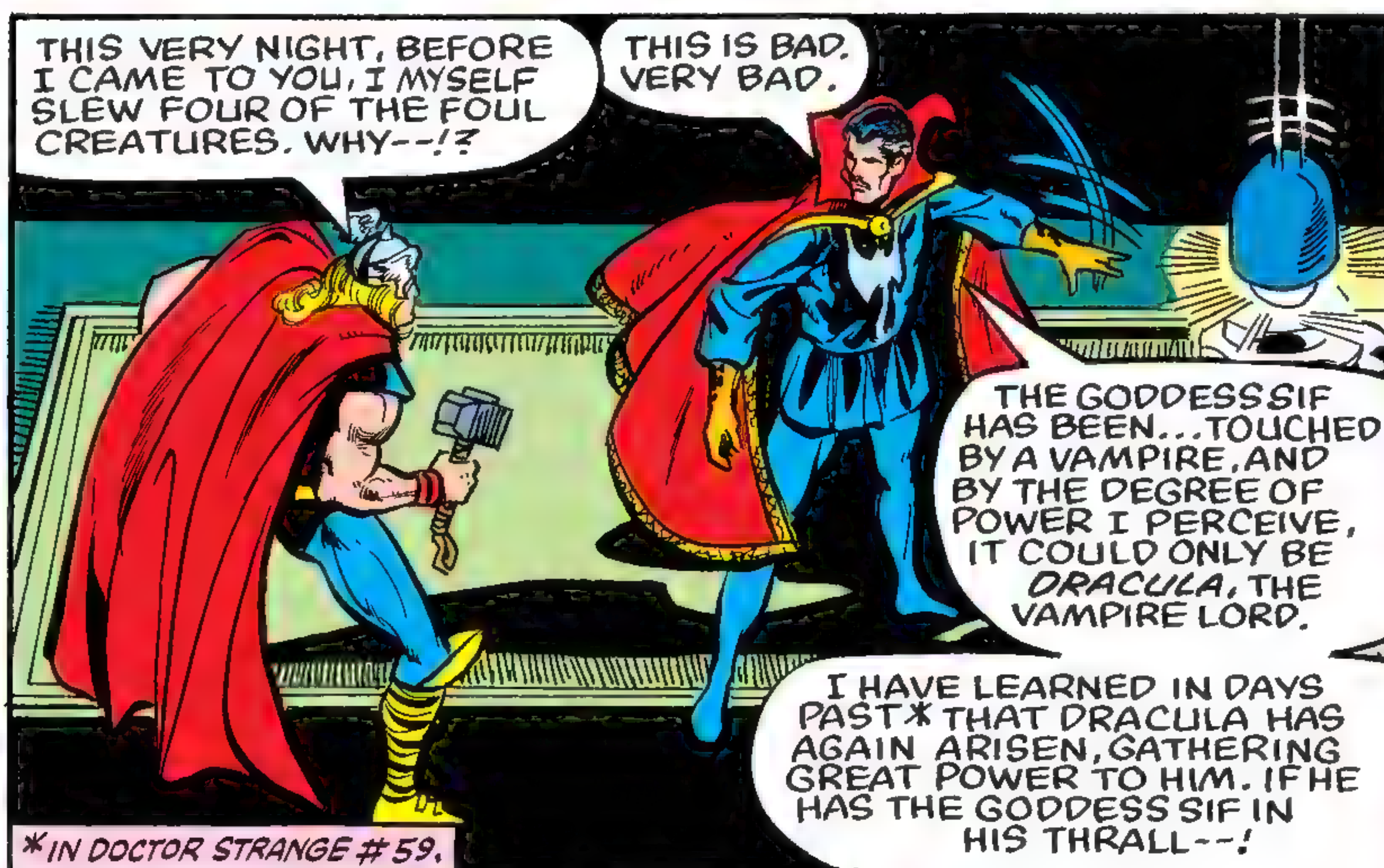
IT IS NOW BUT A SMALL FEAT TO TRACE ITS AURA TO THE RUNESTAFF ITSELF, AND DISCOVER ITS PRESENT WHEREABOUTS.

I SEE IT. IT IS ON A WORLD WHOSE LOCATION I CAN MYSTICALLY IMPRESS WITHIN YOUR MIND.



BUT-- WAIT! WHAT IS THIS AURA OF MALEVOLENCE SURROUNDING SIF--?

THOR! WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF-- VAMPIRES?



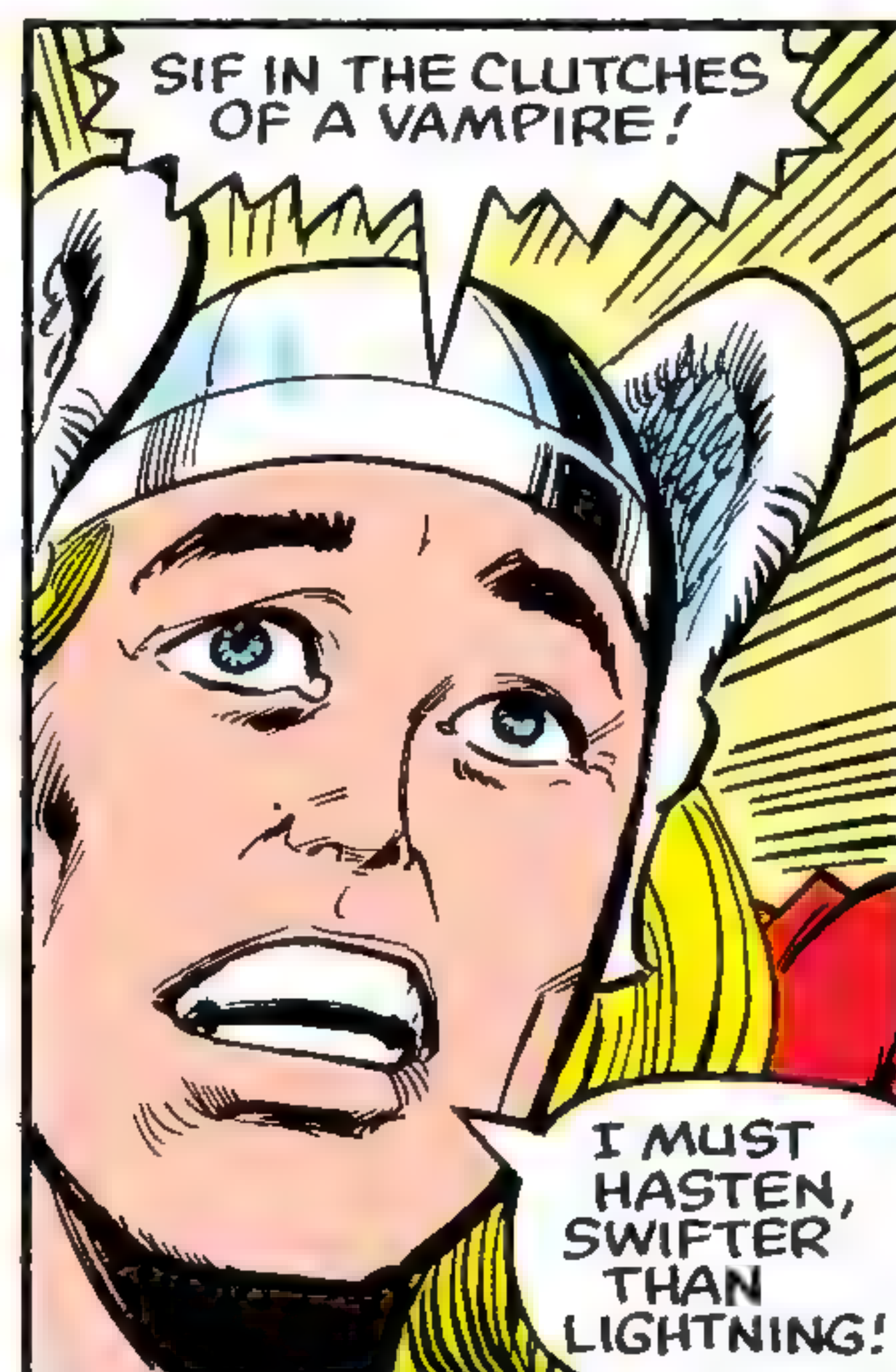
THIS VERY NIGHT, BEFORE I CAME TO YOU, I MYSELF SLEW FOUR OF THE FOUL CREATURES. WHY--!?

THIS IS BAD. VERY BAD.

THE GODDESS SIF HAS BEEN... TOUCHED BY A VAMPIRE, AND BY THE DEGREE OF POWER I PERCEIVE, IT COULD ONLY BE DRACULA, THE VAMPIRE LORD.

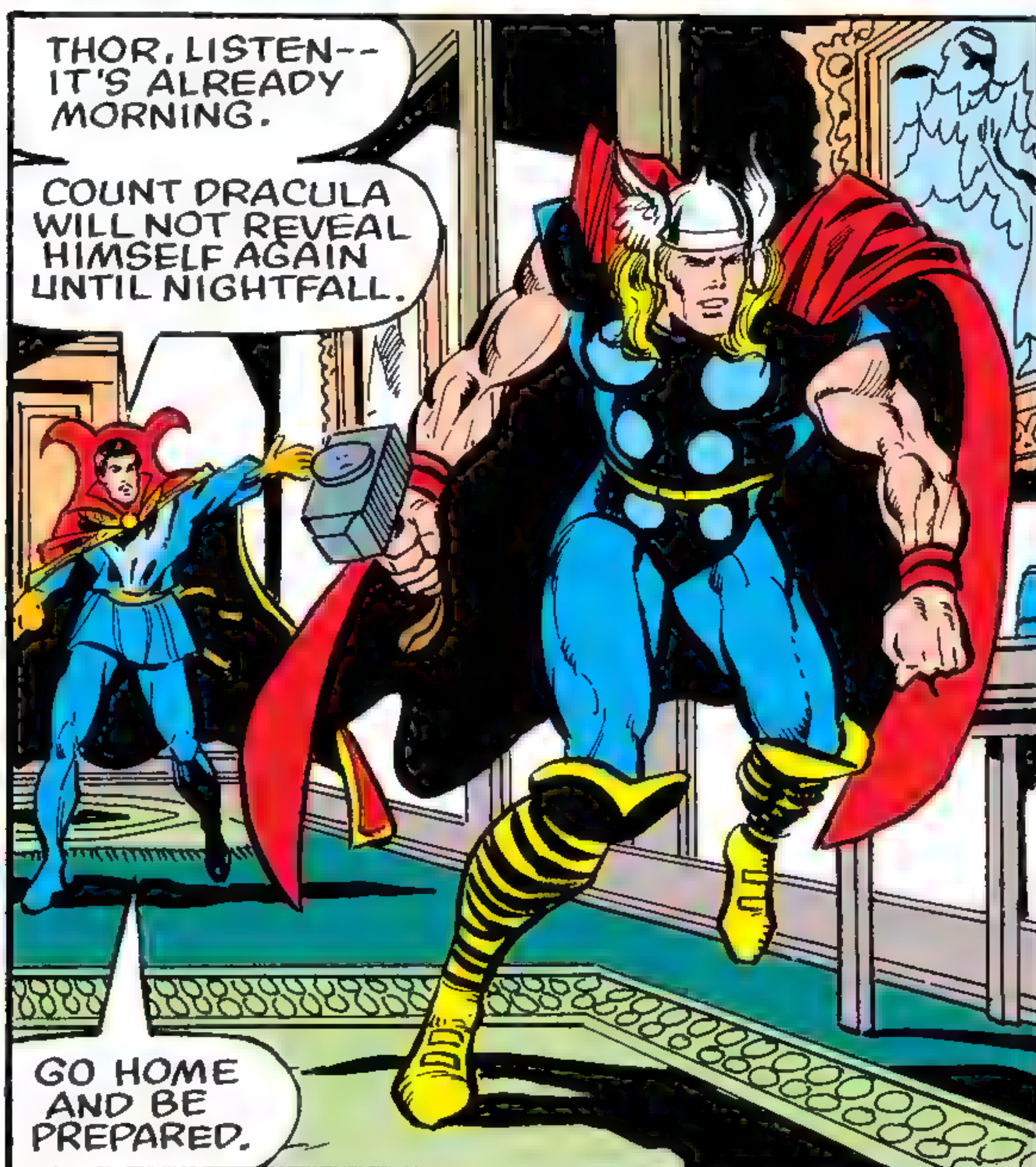
I HAVE LEARNED IN DAYS PAST * THAT DRACULA HAS AGAIN ARISEN, GATHERING GREAT POWER TO HIM. IF HE HAS THE GODDESS SIF IN HIS THRALL--!

*IN DOCTOR STRANGE # 59.



SIF IN THE CLUTCHES OF A VAMPIRE!

I MUST HASTEN, SWIFTER THAN LIGHTNING!



THOR, LISTEN-- IT'S ALREADY MORNING.

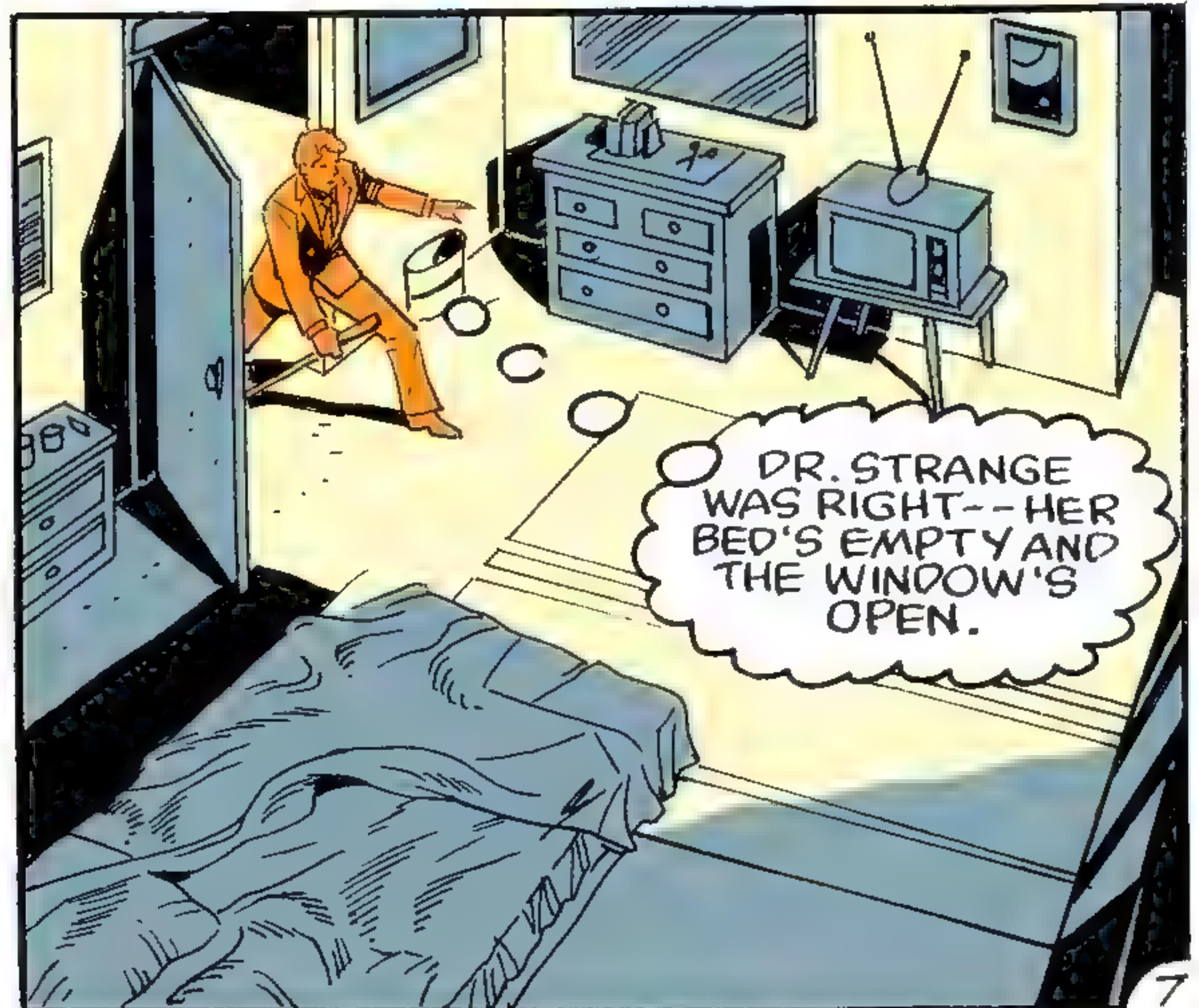
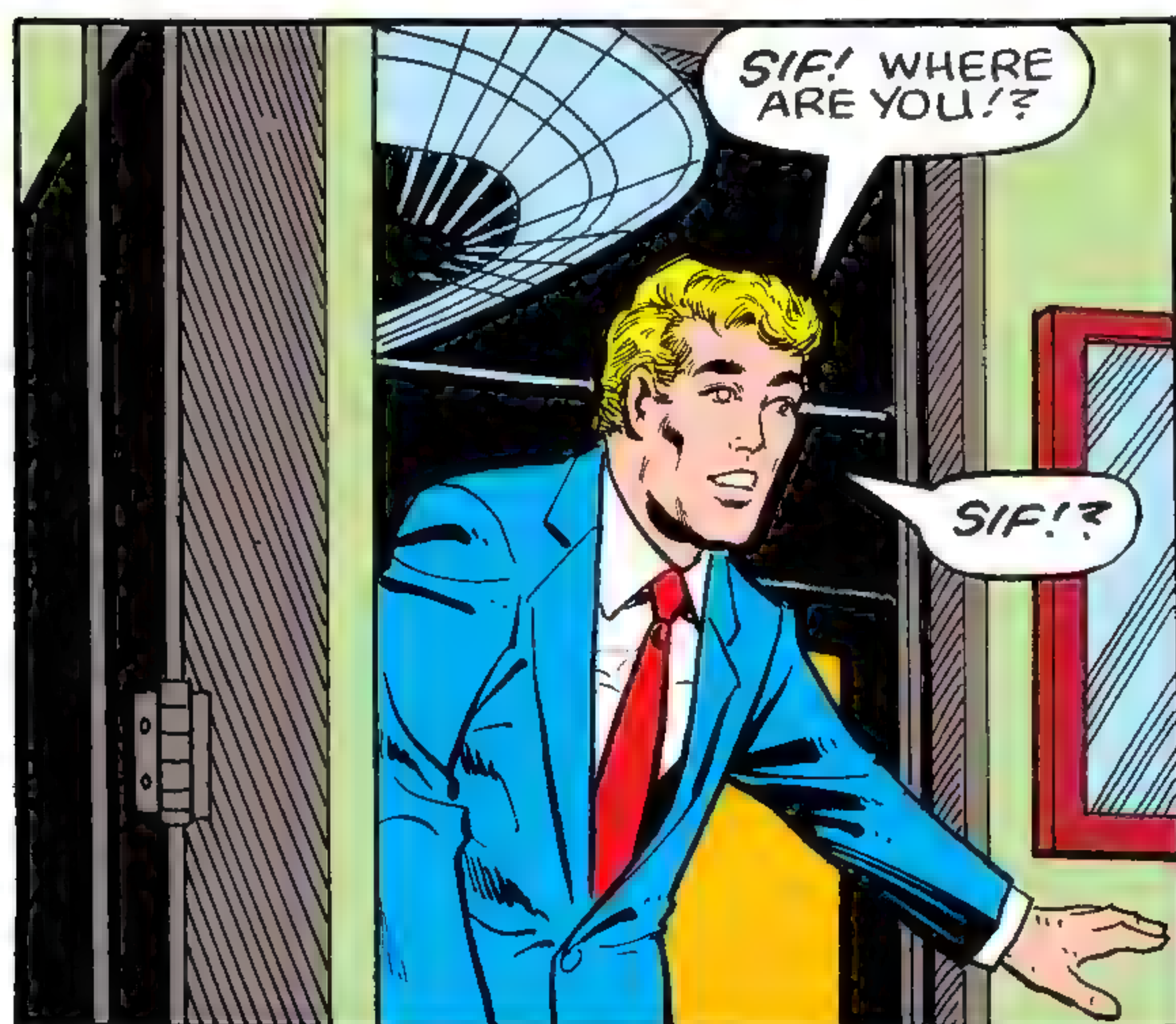
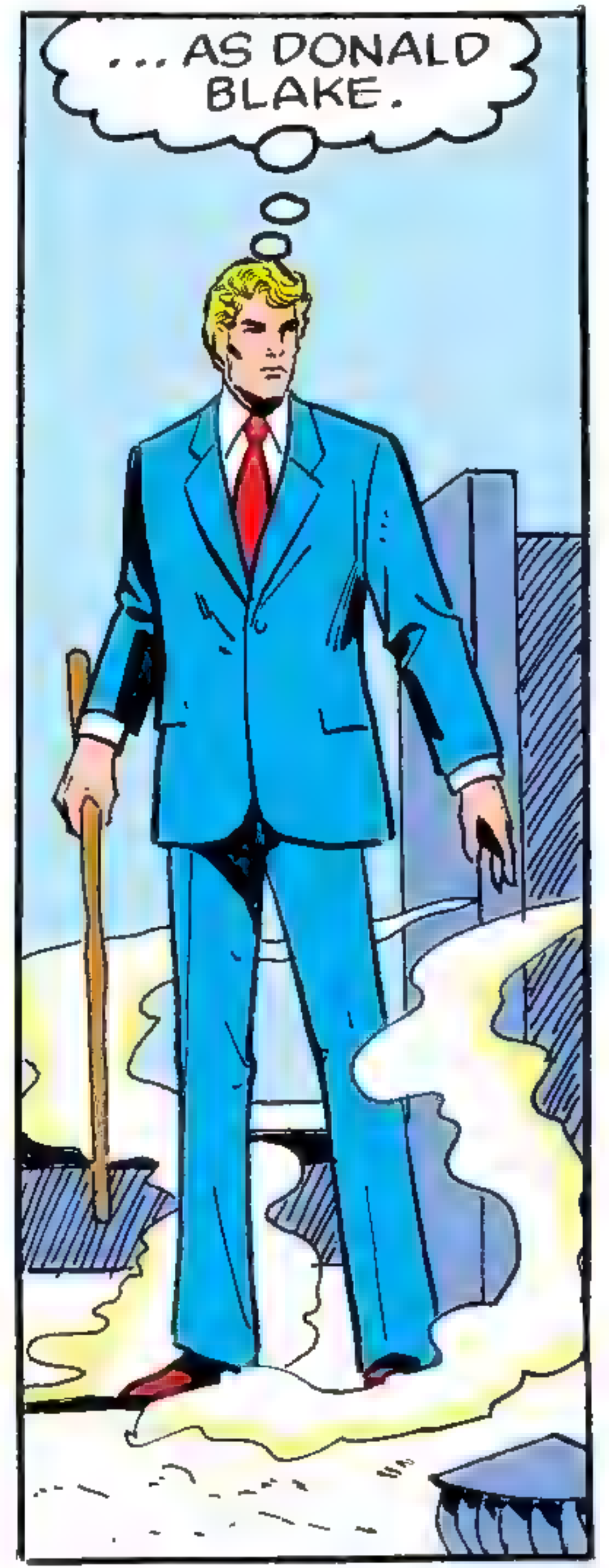
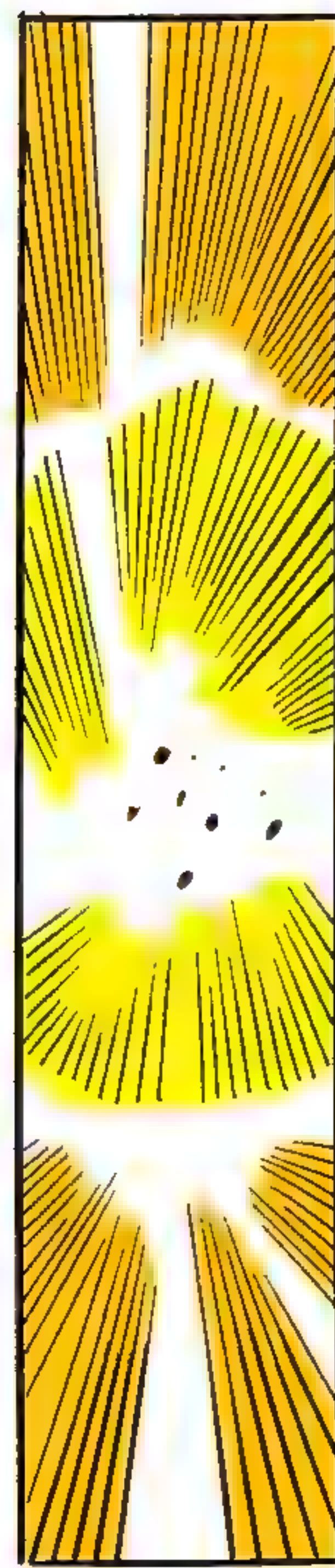
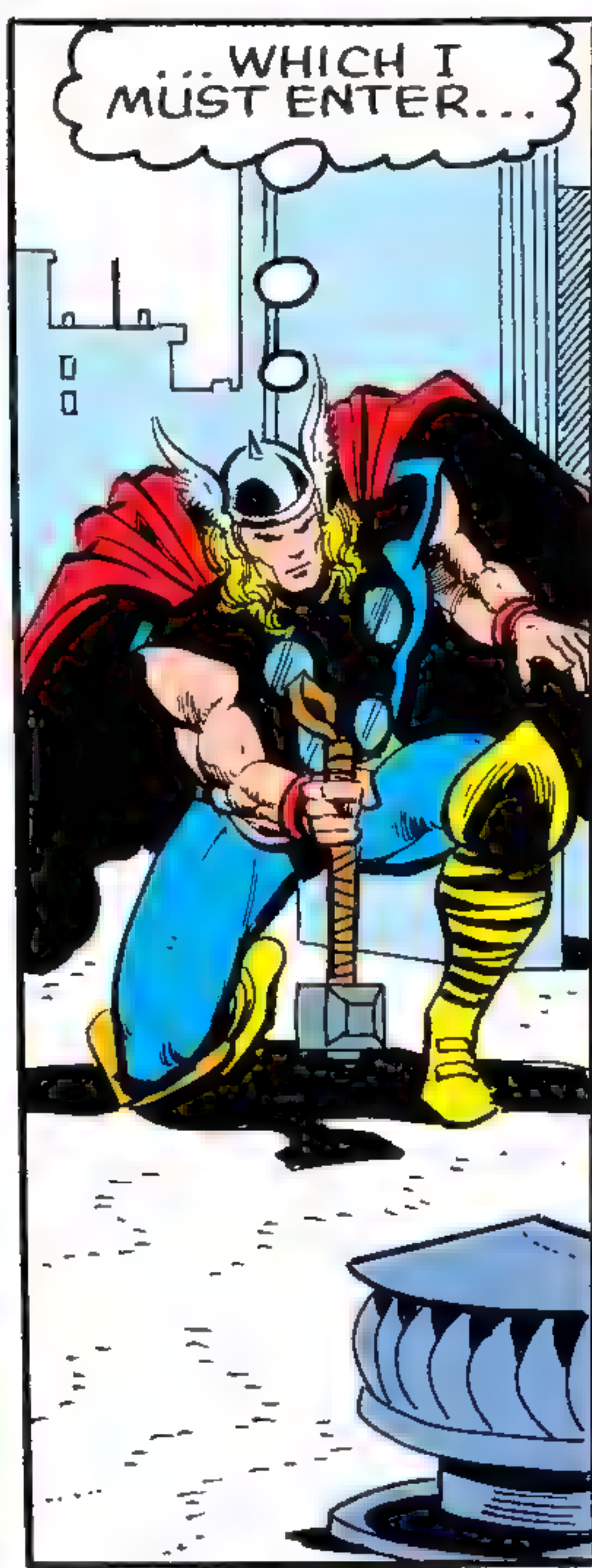
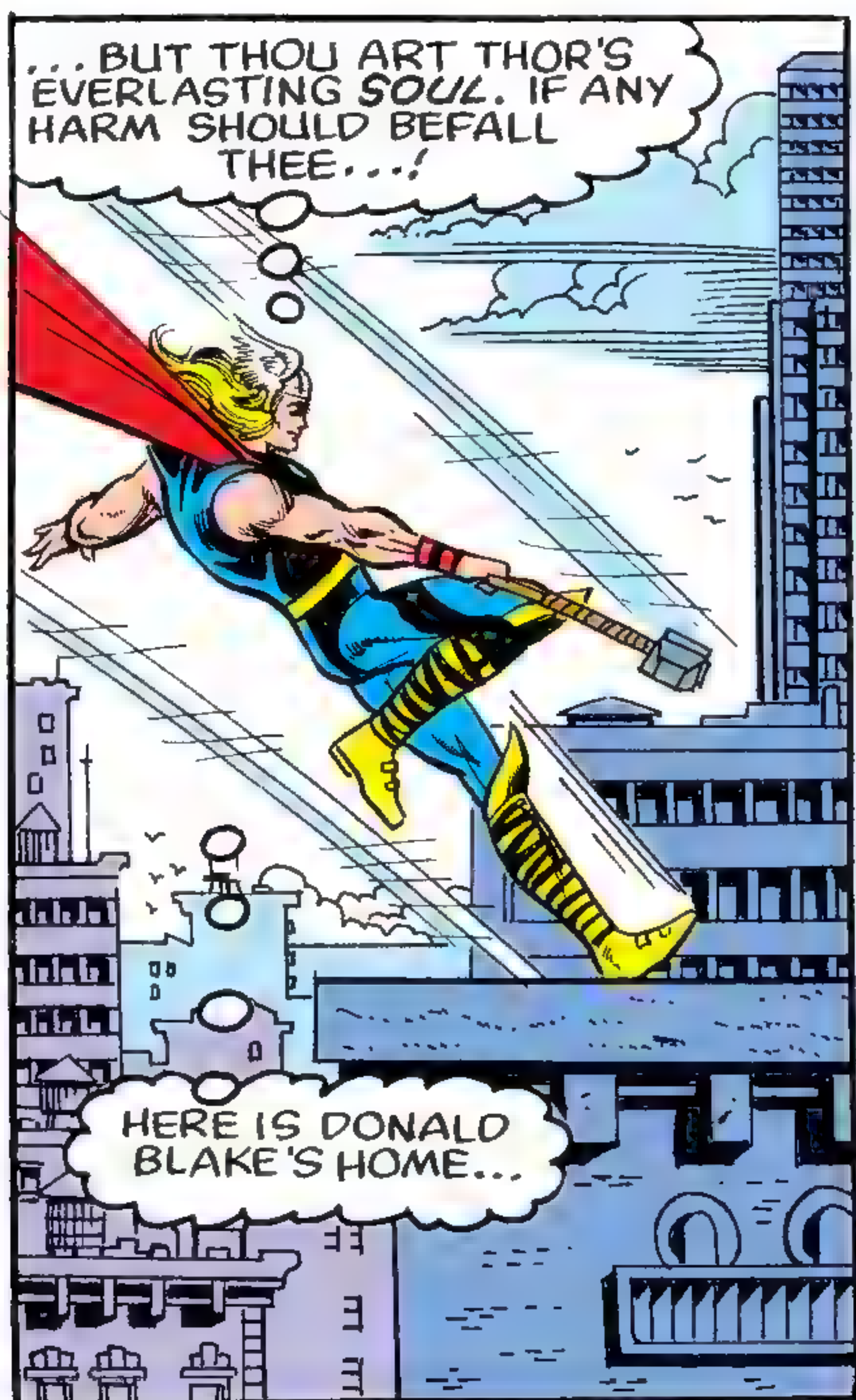
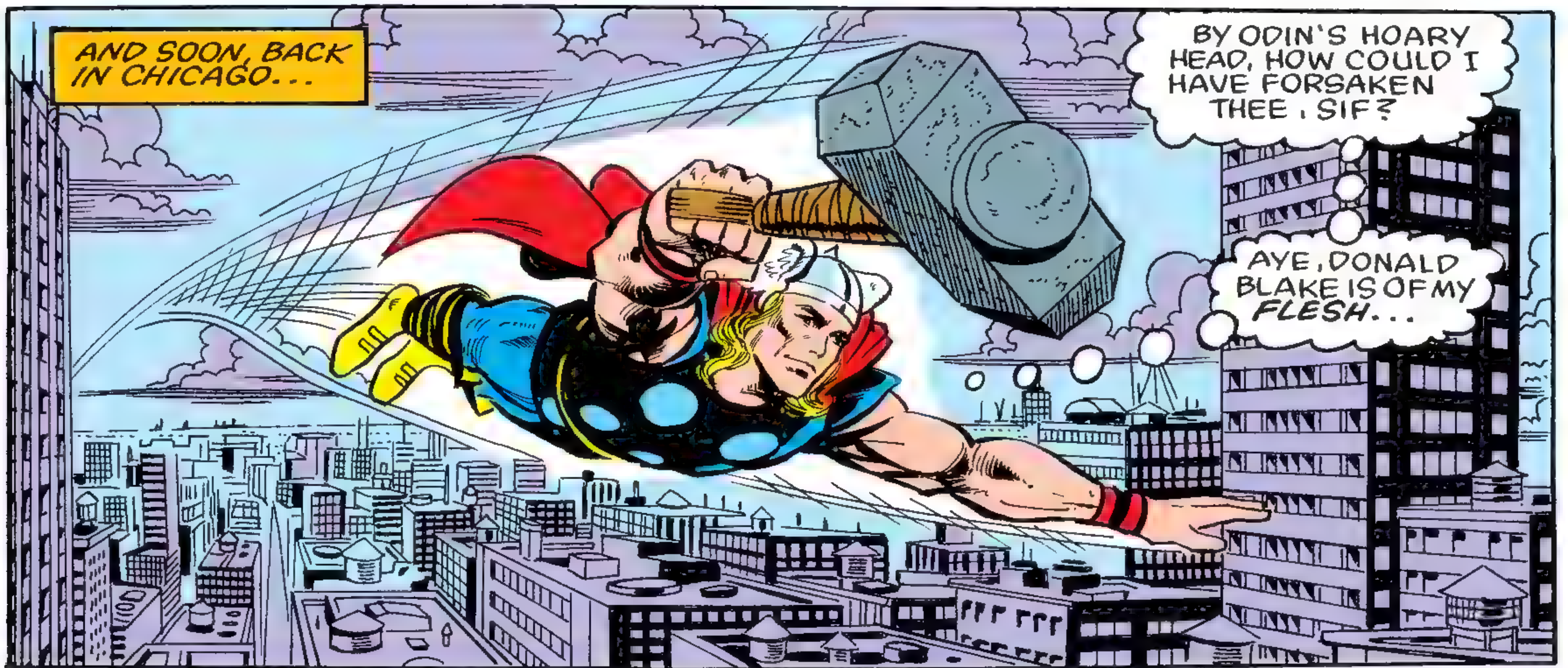
COUNT DRACULA WILL NOT REVEAL HIMSELF AGAIN UNTIL NIGHTFALL.

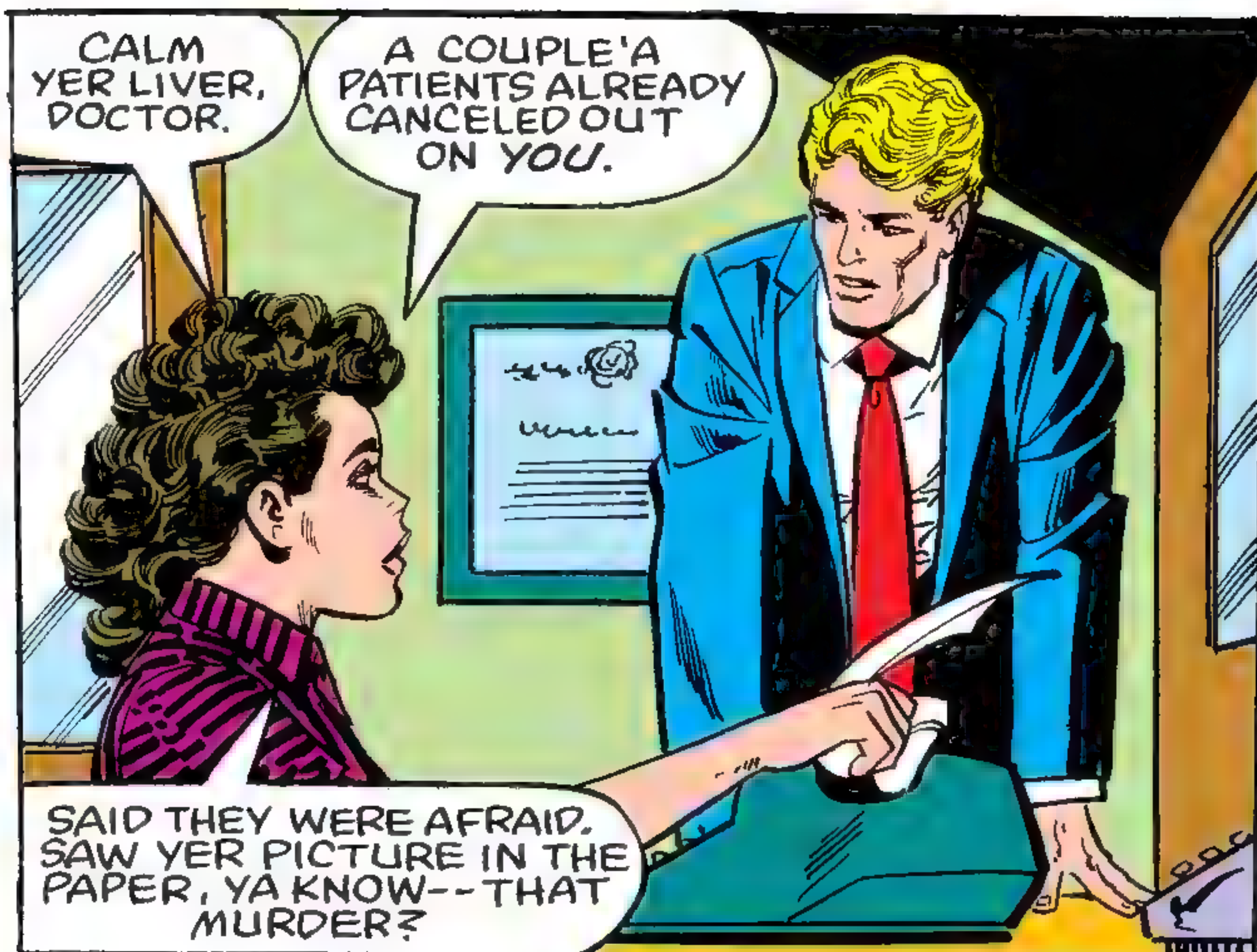
GO HOME AND BE PREPARED.

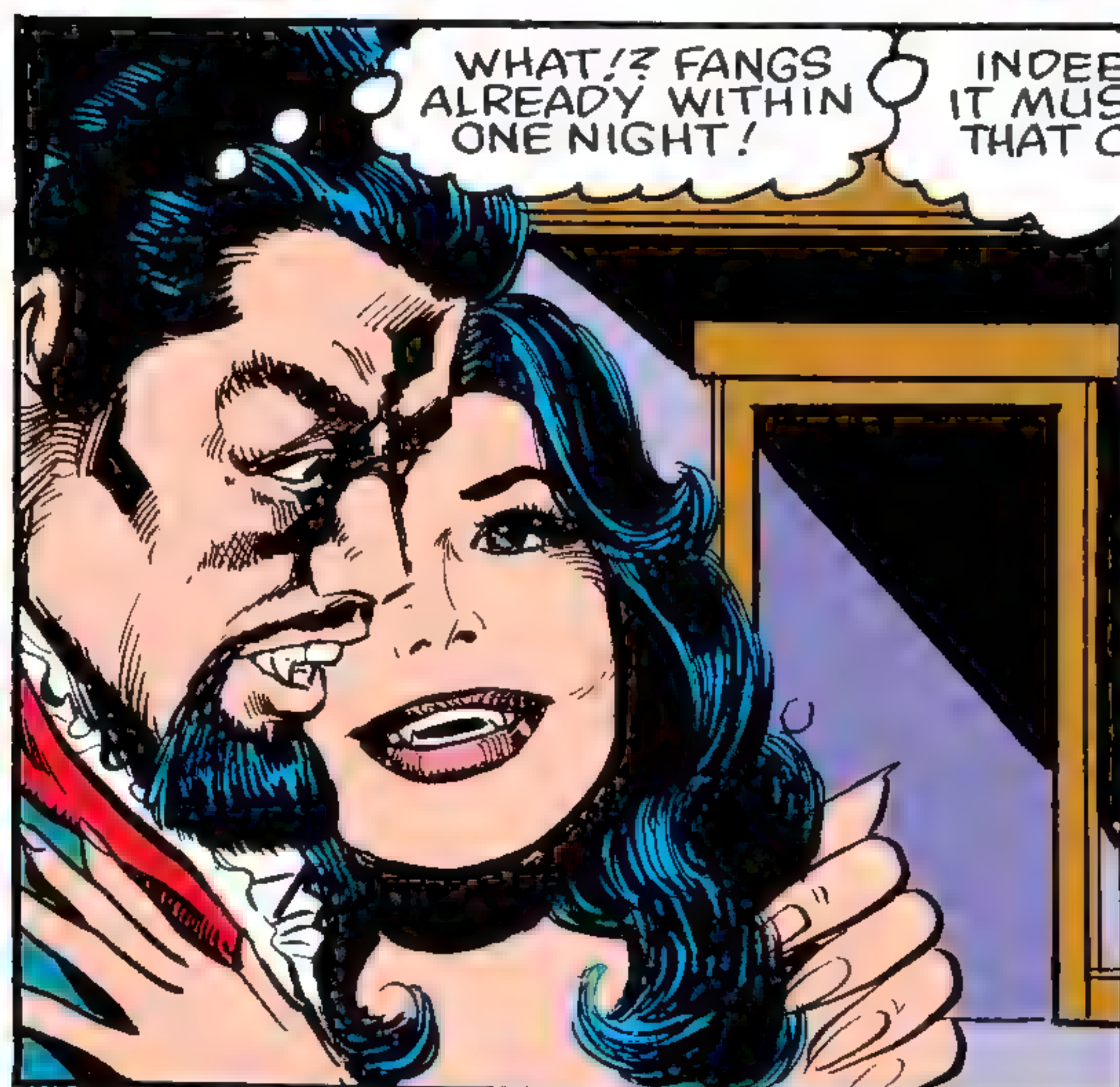
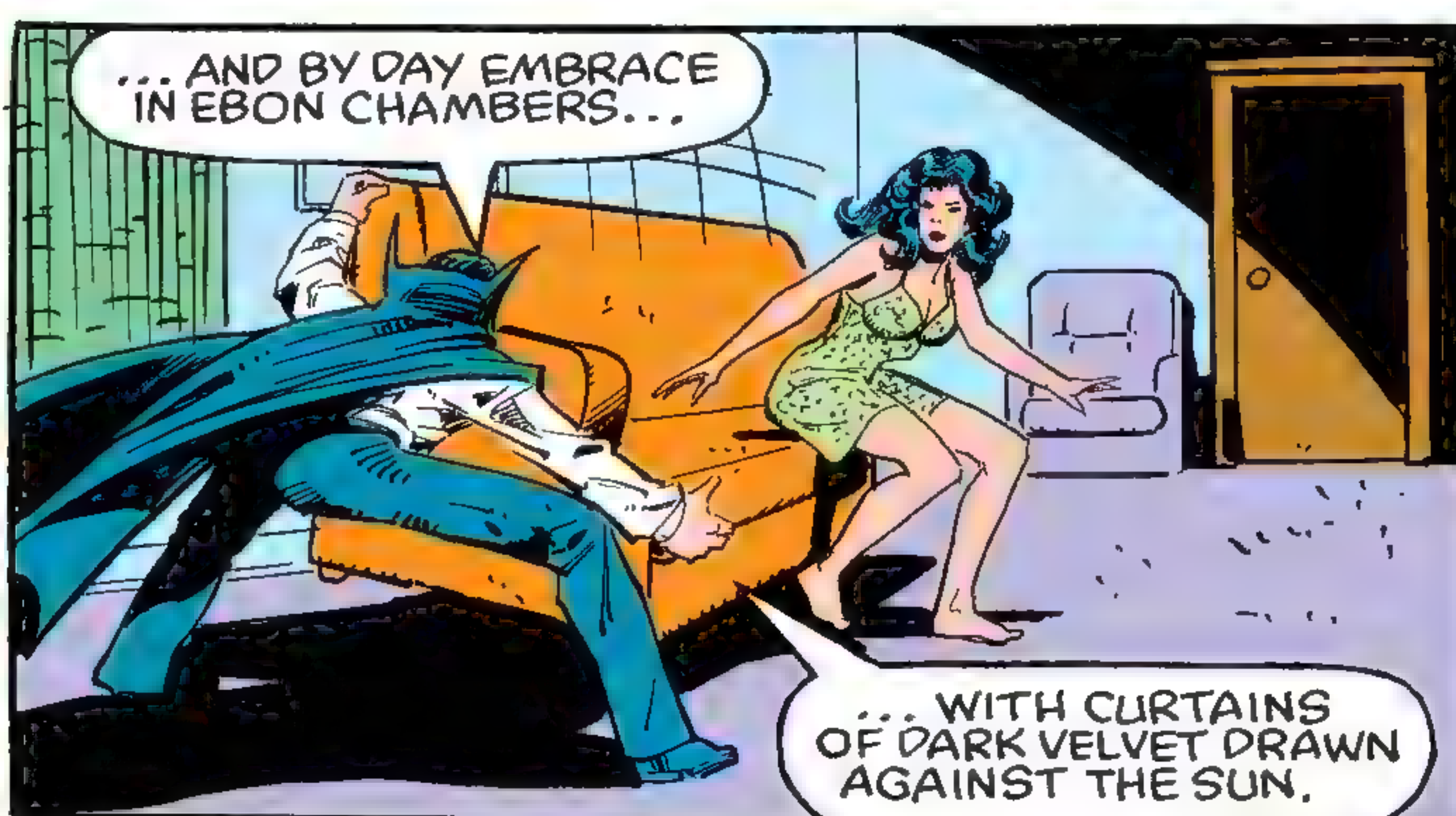
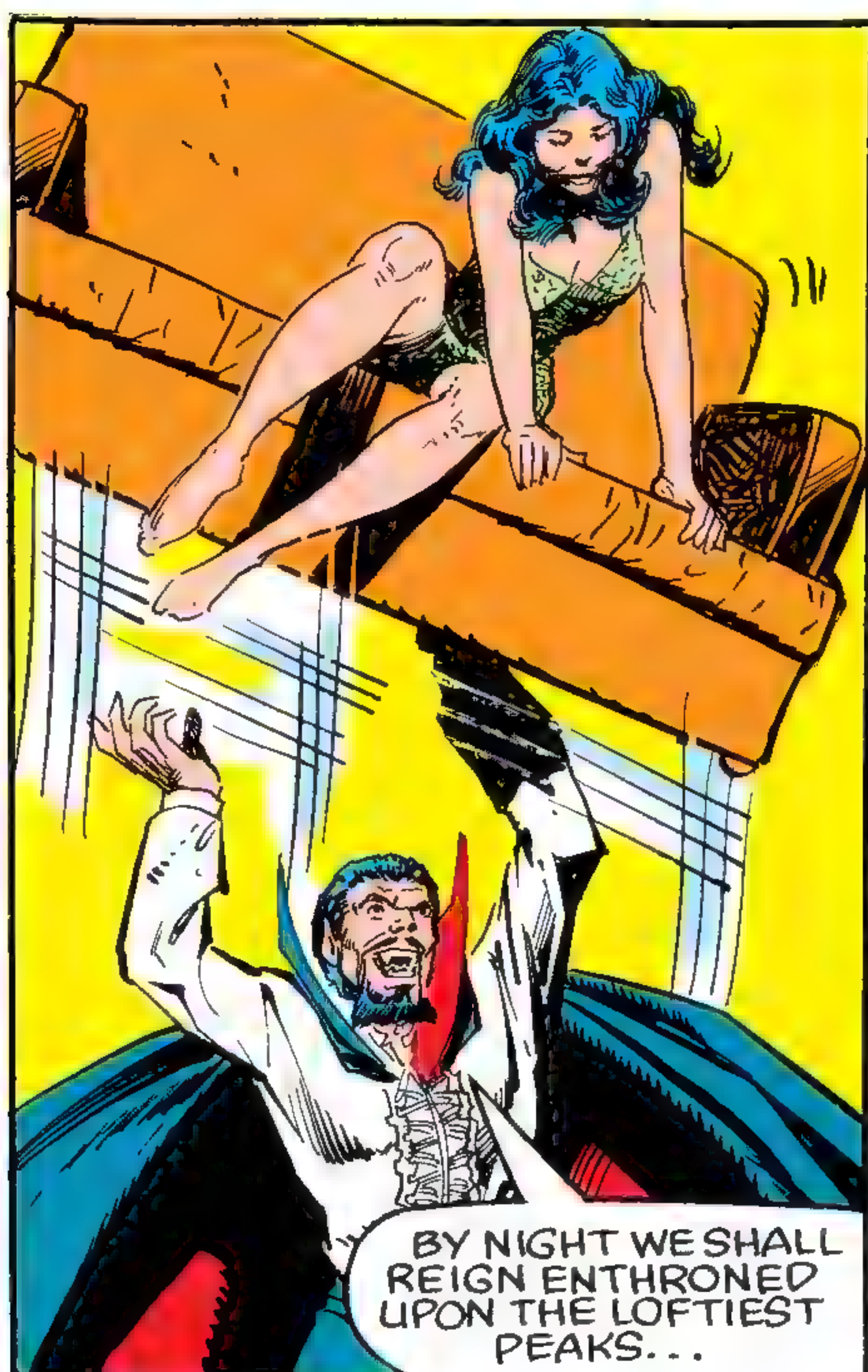
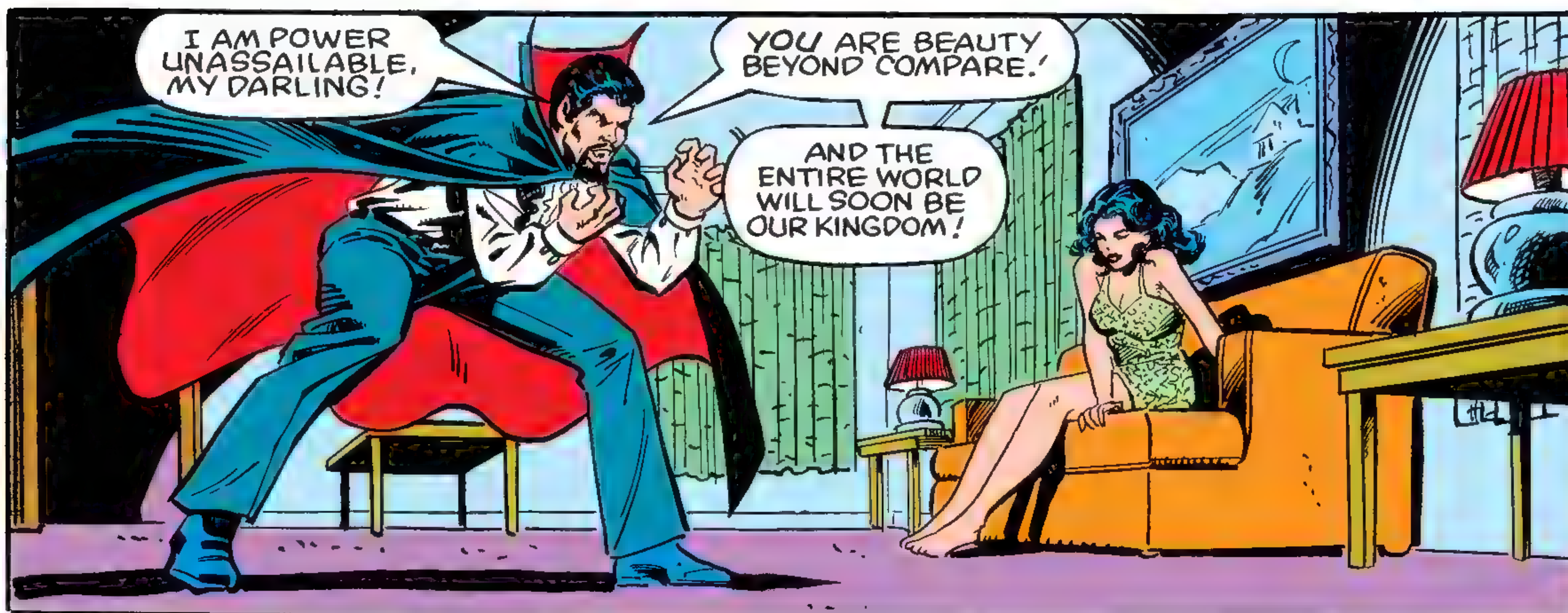


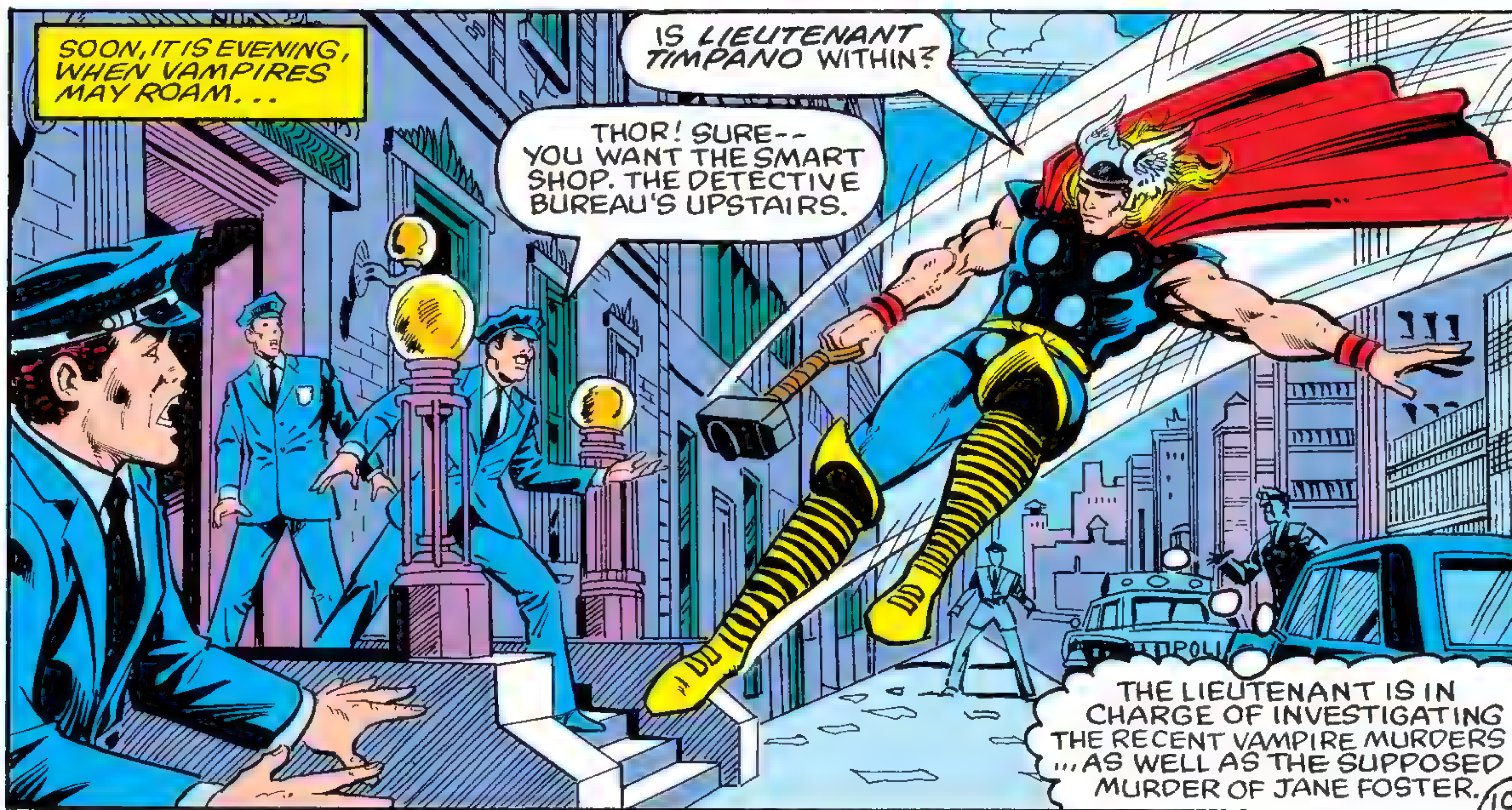
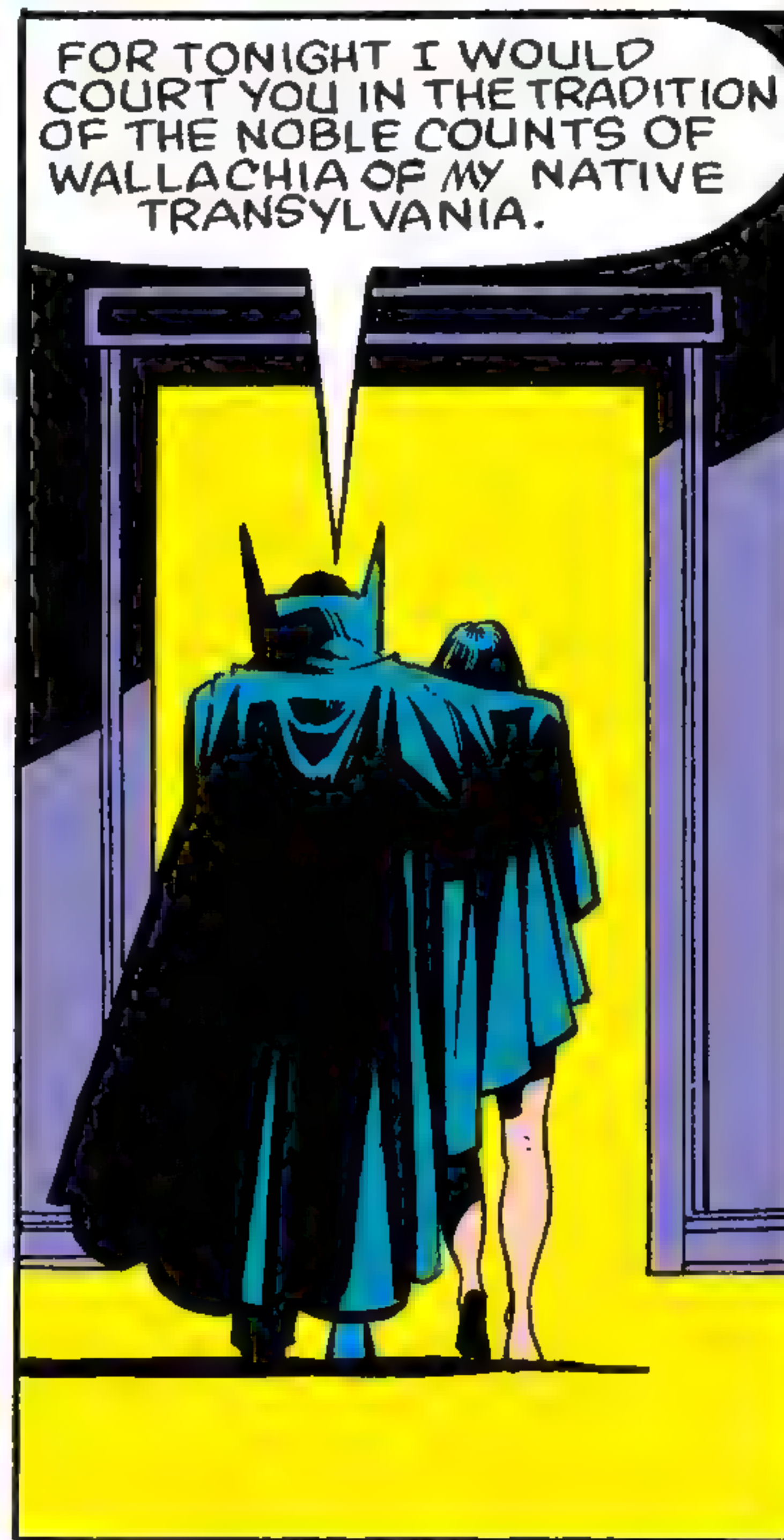
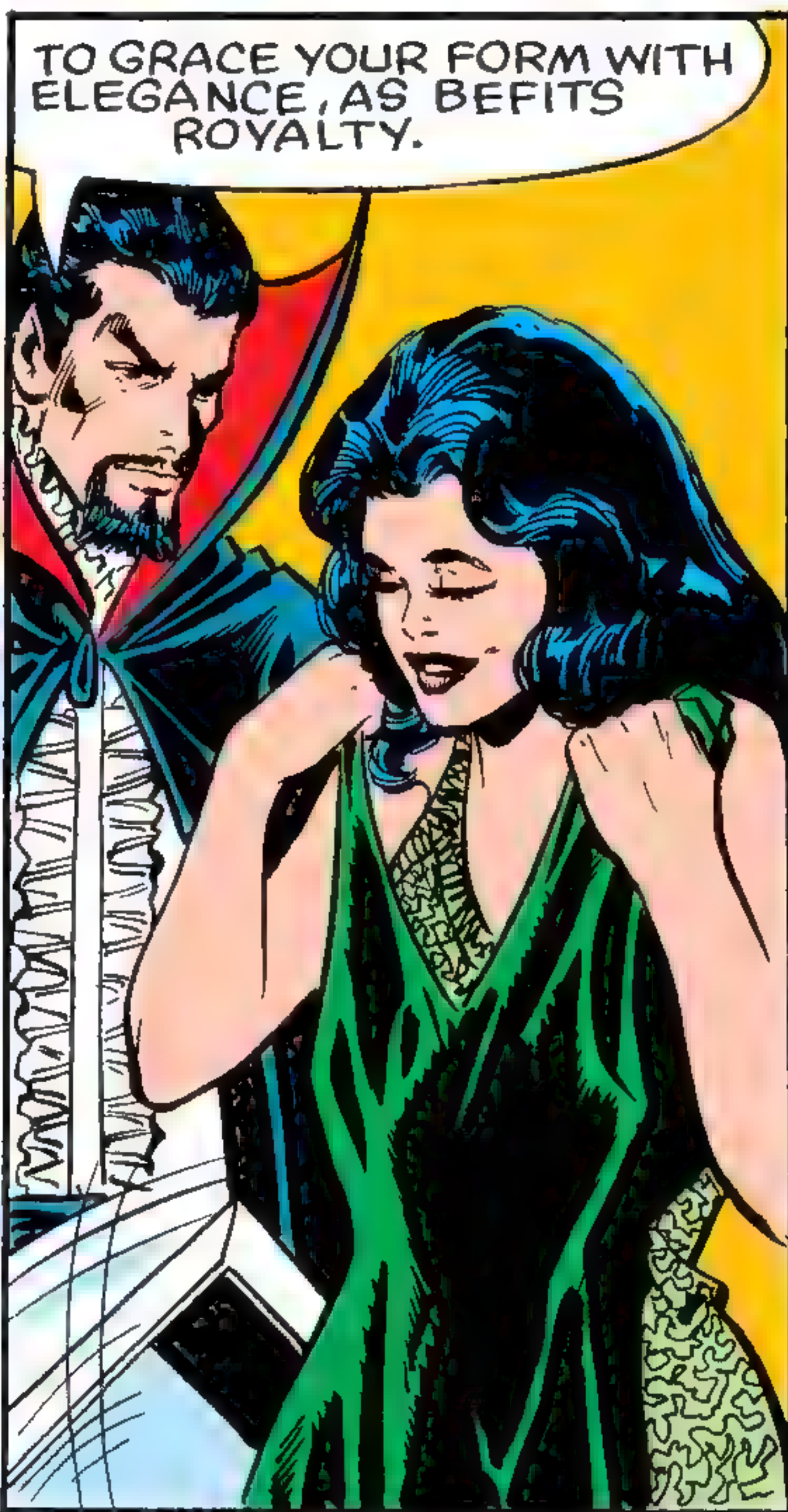
I SHALL PROBE MATTERS FURTHER AND INFORM YOU WHAT I LEARN.

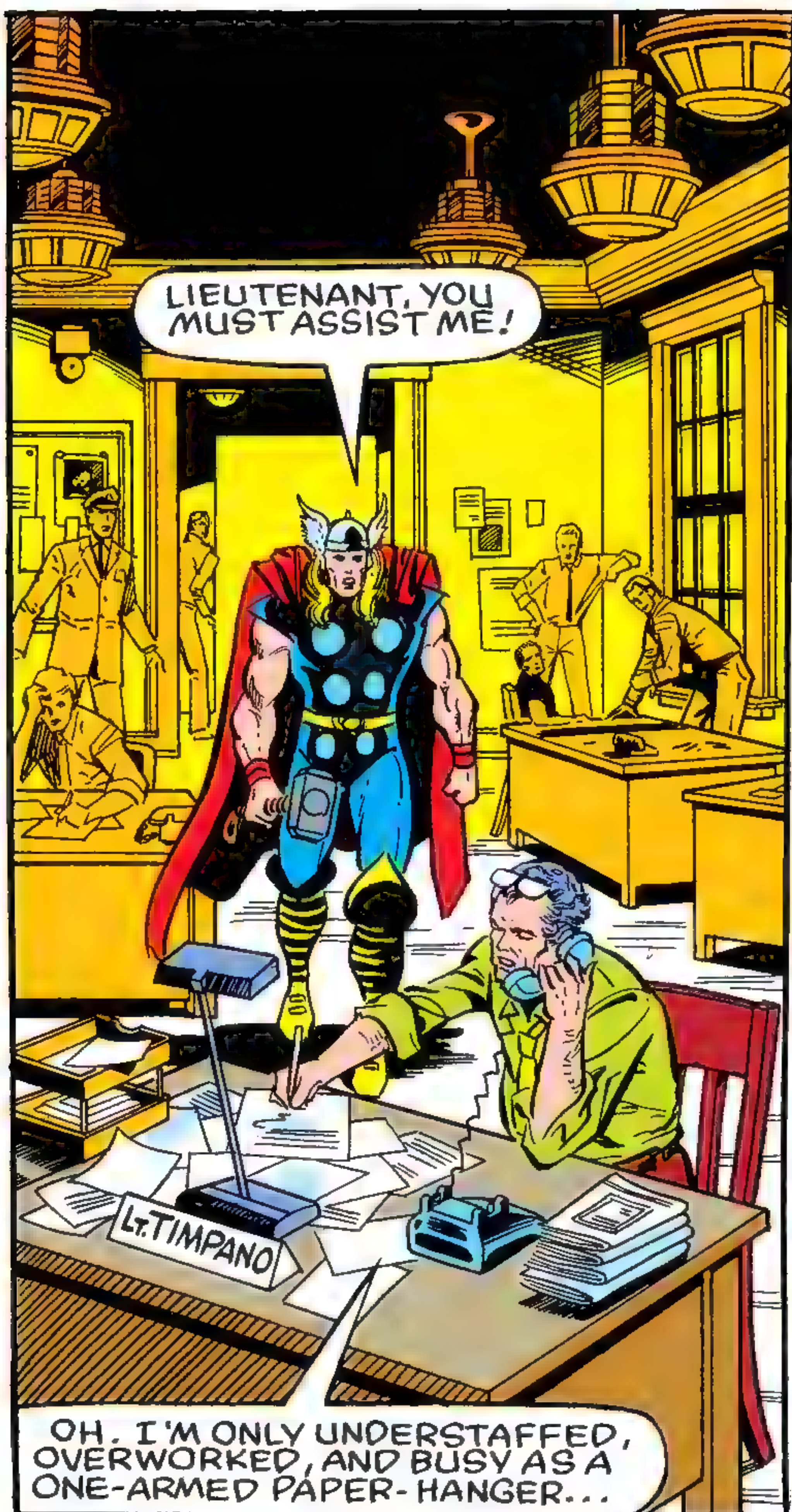
I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU, FRIEND.

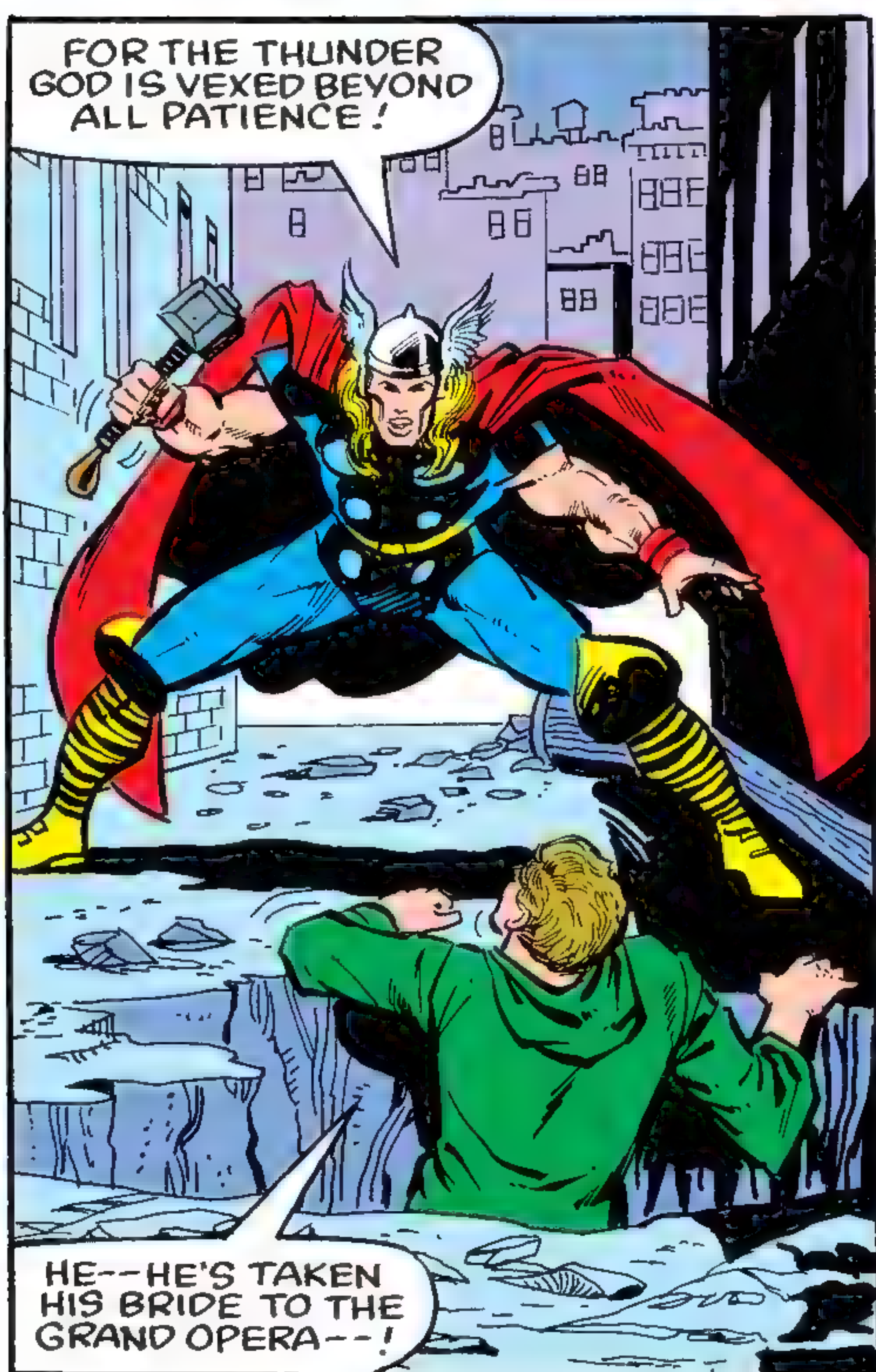
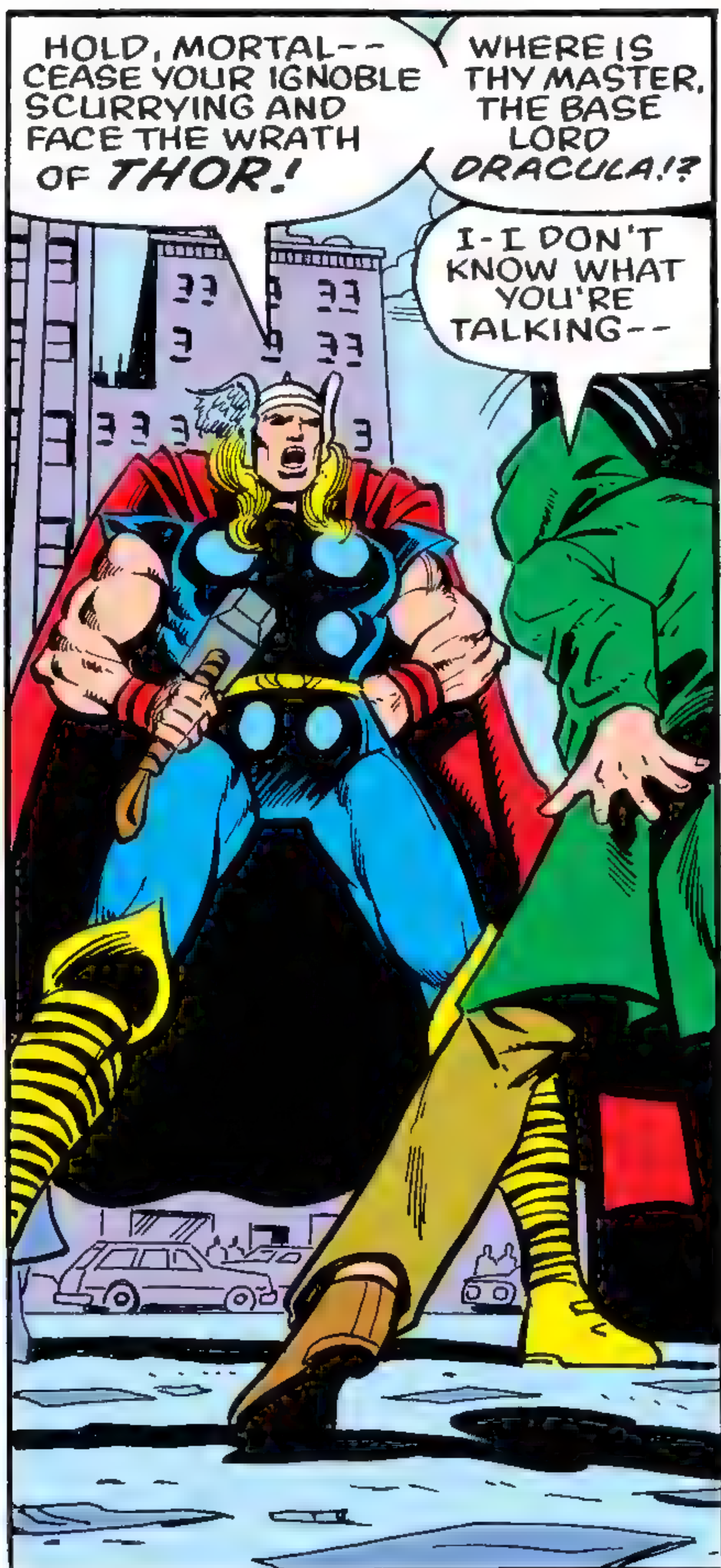


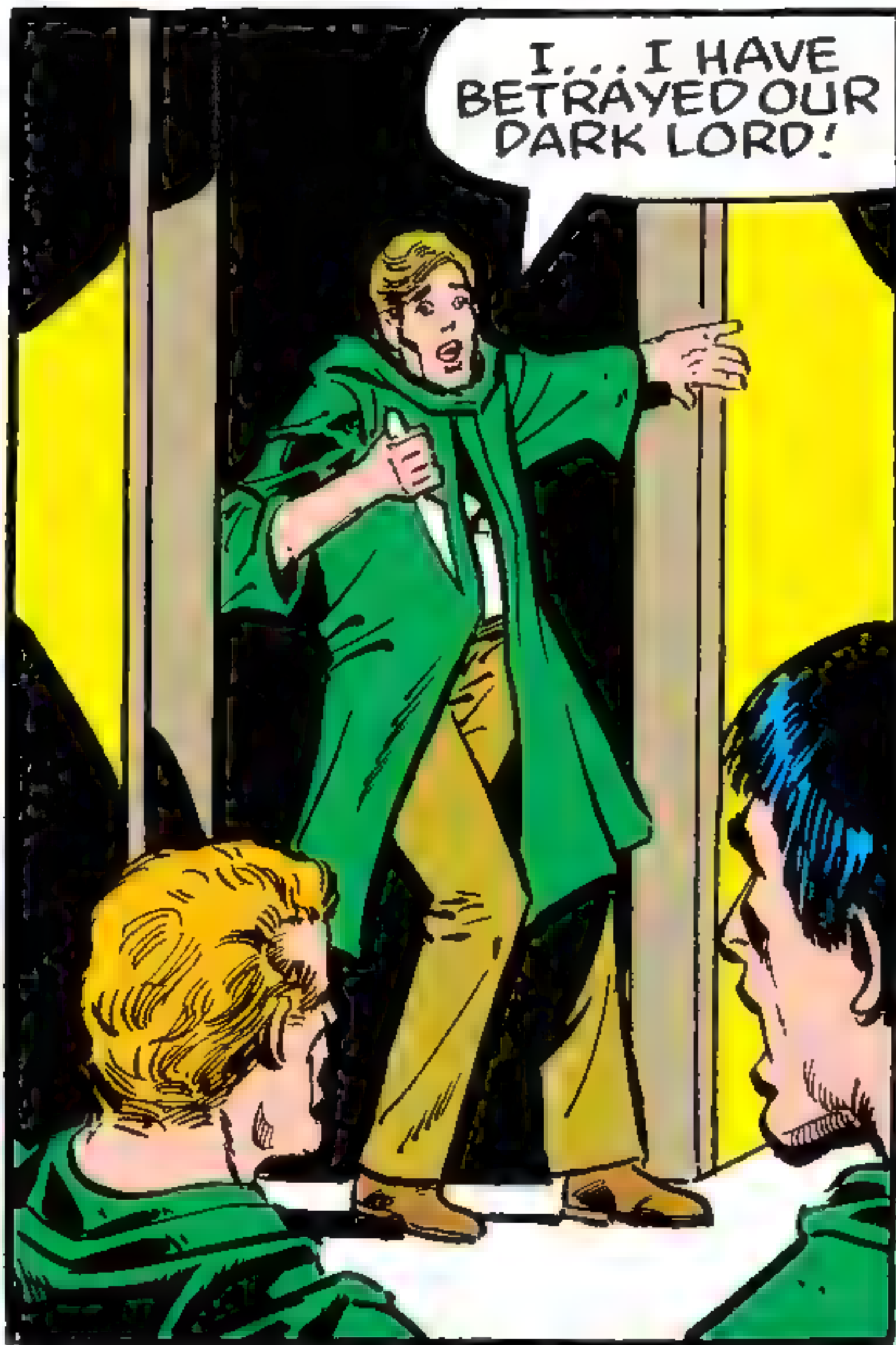










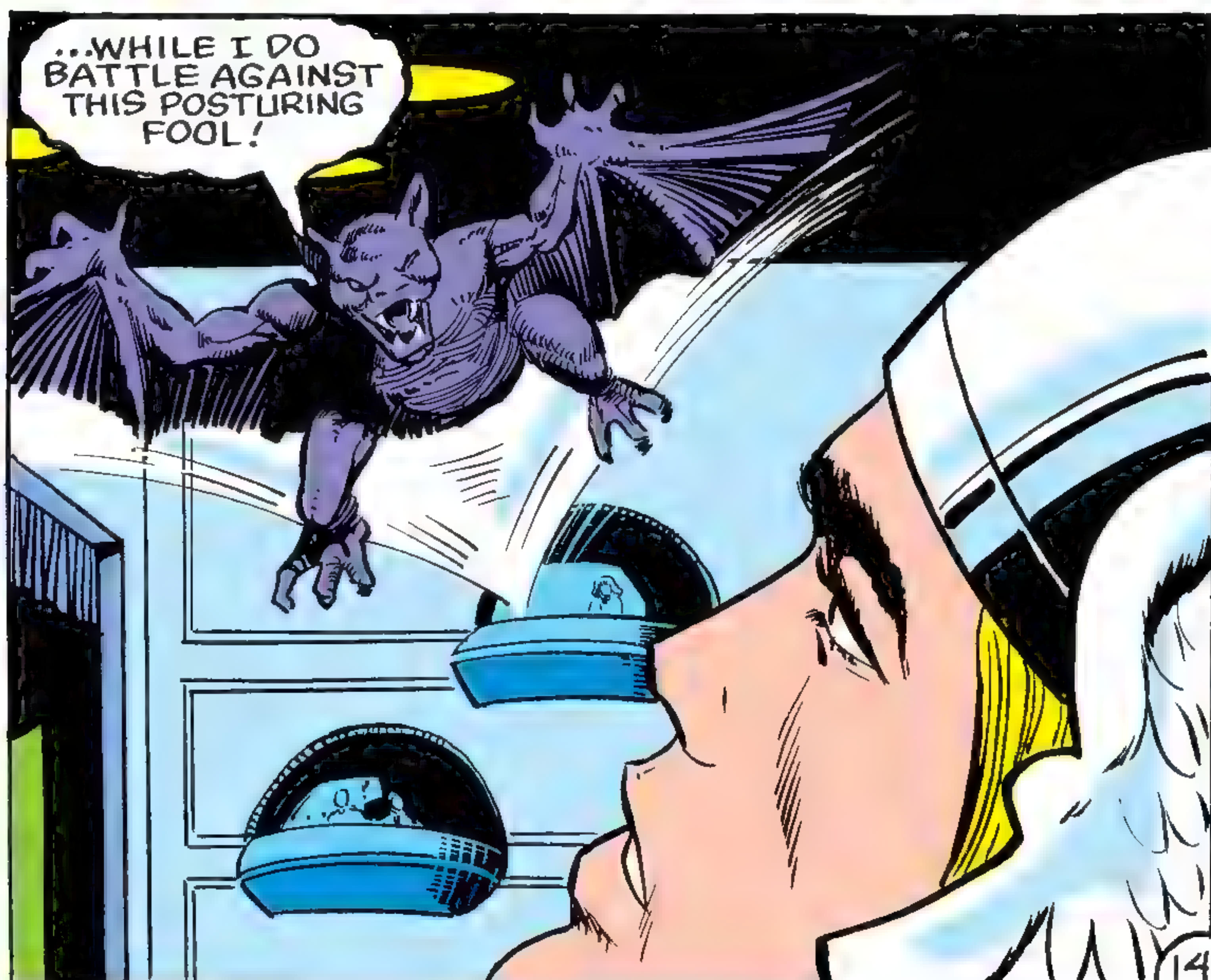
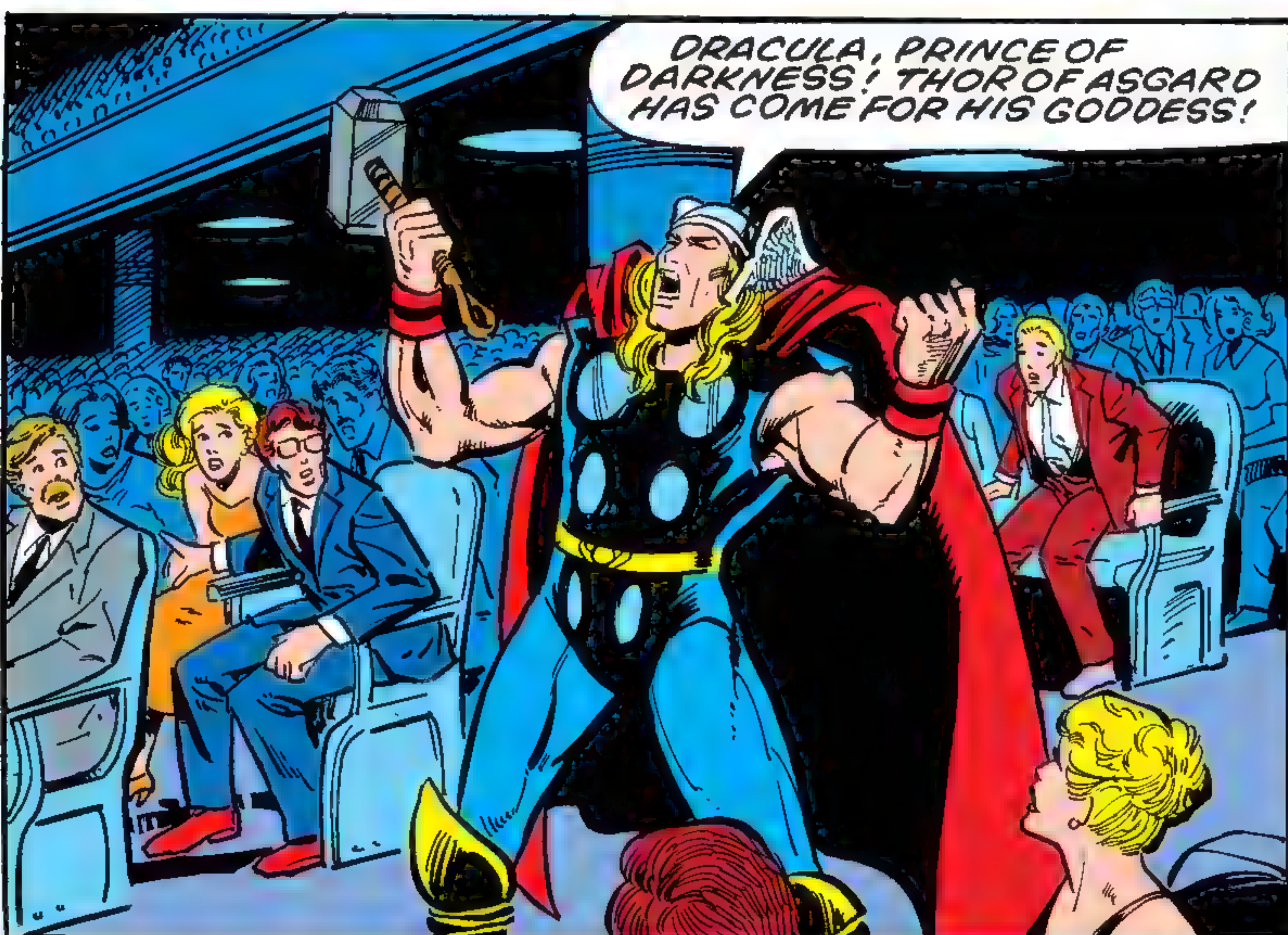
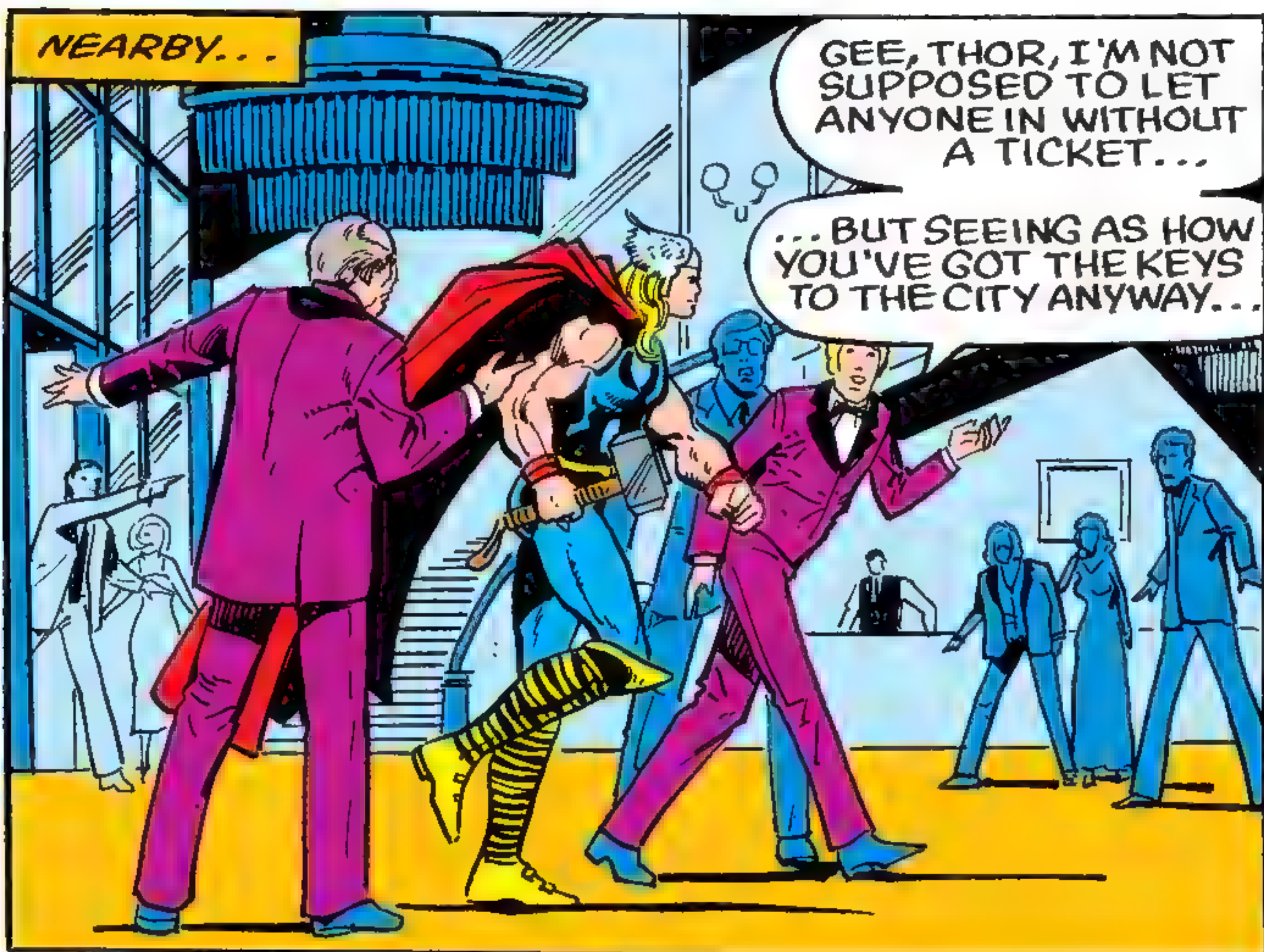


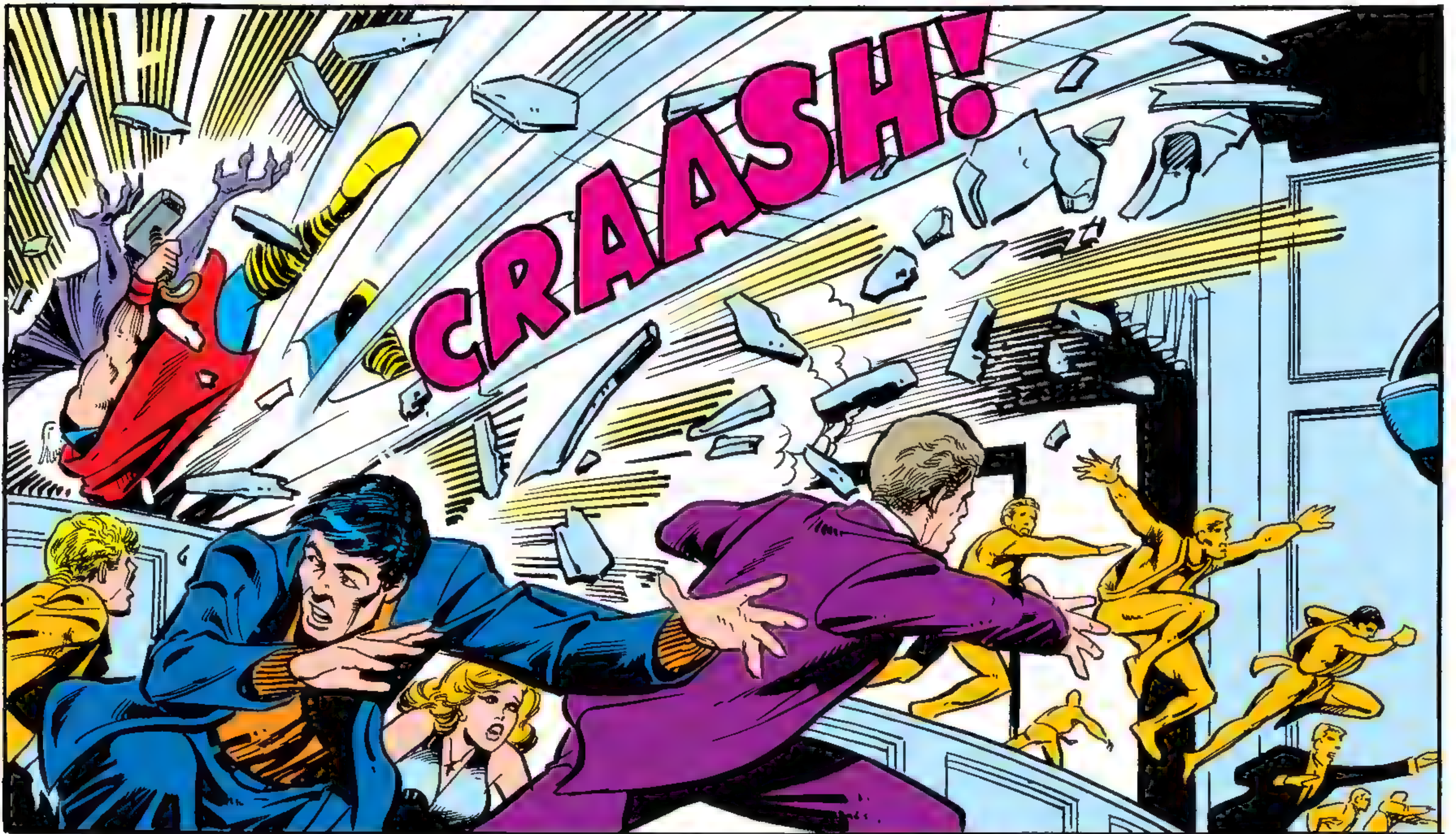
MEANWHILE, AT CHICAGO OPERA HOUSE...



WAGNER'S TANNHÄUSER, MY DEAR.
IT'S MAJESTIC CONFLICT BETWEEN SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE HAS INTRIGUED ME EVER SINCE I ATTENDED THE PREMIERE IN DRESDEN IN 1845.









A PRETTY RELIC OF A FORGOTTEN RELIGION. THE PRINCE OF VAMPIRES HAS CONTEMPT FOR YOUR PLAYTHING!

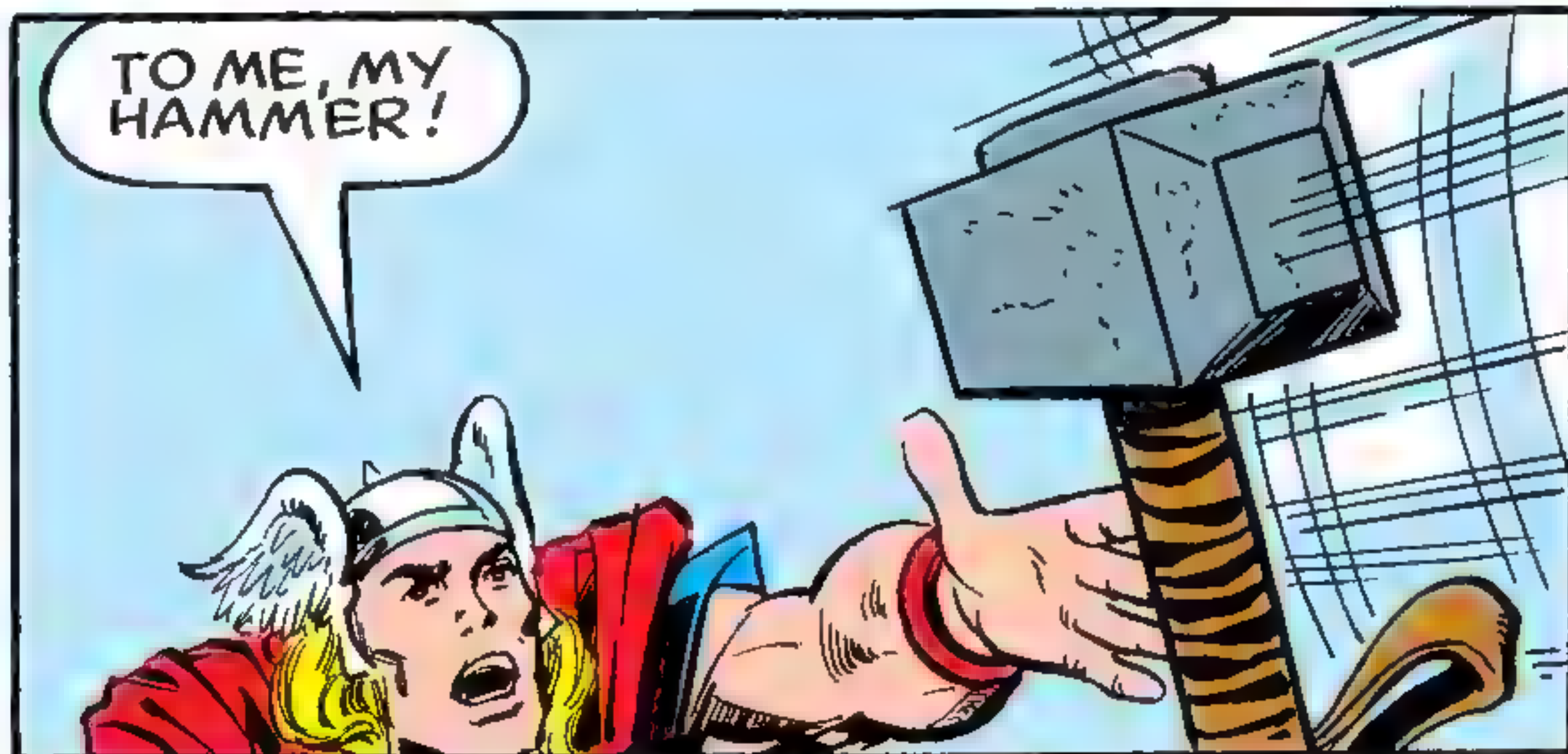


CRAAK!



HASTEN, MORTALS! I MUST FOLLOW TO PREVENT THE DEVIL'S ESCAPE!

WE'RE GOING, WE'RE GOING!



TO ME, MY HAMMER!



SO YOU SEEK TO FLEE, EH, COWARD!?

I SEEK ONLY A MORE SPACIOUS ARENA FOR COMBAT, BLIND DOLT!



AND OUT OF DOORS
I CAN SUMMON
THE POWERS OF
THE STORM!

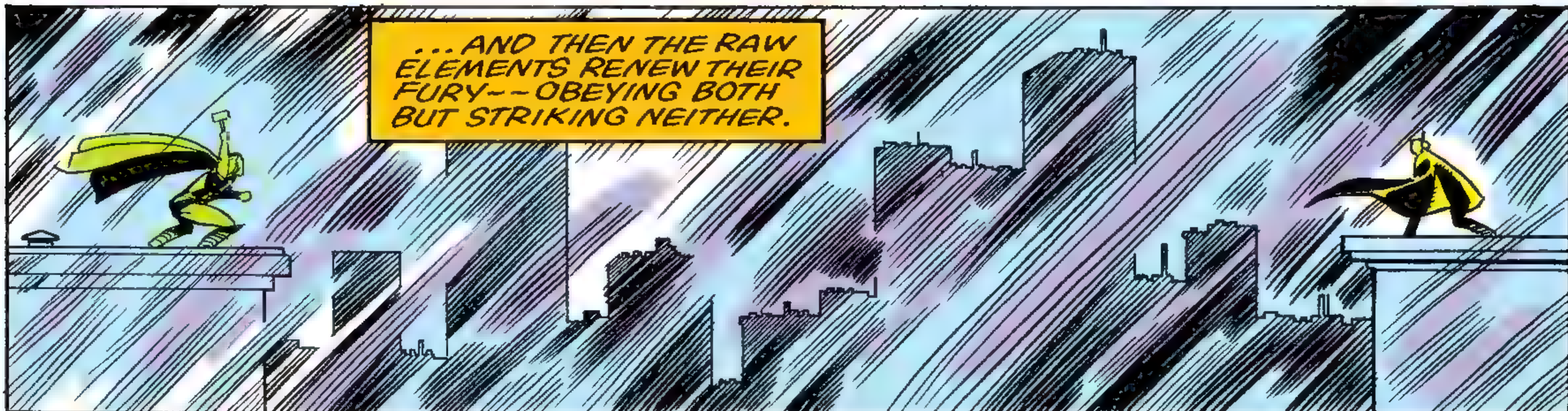
DARK CLOUDS
AND ROLLING THUNDER,
HARKEN TO DRACULA'S
COMMAND AND SMITE
THIS GODLING!



NEVER! THE
THUNDER GOD
CHARGES THE
CELESTIAL
ELEMENTS TO
STRIKE YOU, BLACK
VILLAIN, AND
BLAST YOUR
INFERNAL FORM!



FOR THE MOMENT OF A
HEARTBEAT, THE STORM
CEASES--AS THOUGH
PONDERING WHICH
MASTER TO OBEY...



... AND THEN THE RAW
ELEMENTS RENEW THEIR
FURY--OBEYING BOTH
BUT STRIKING NEITHER.



STAND
FORTH,
VAMPIRE!



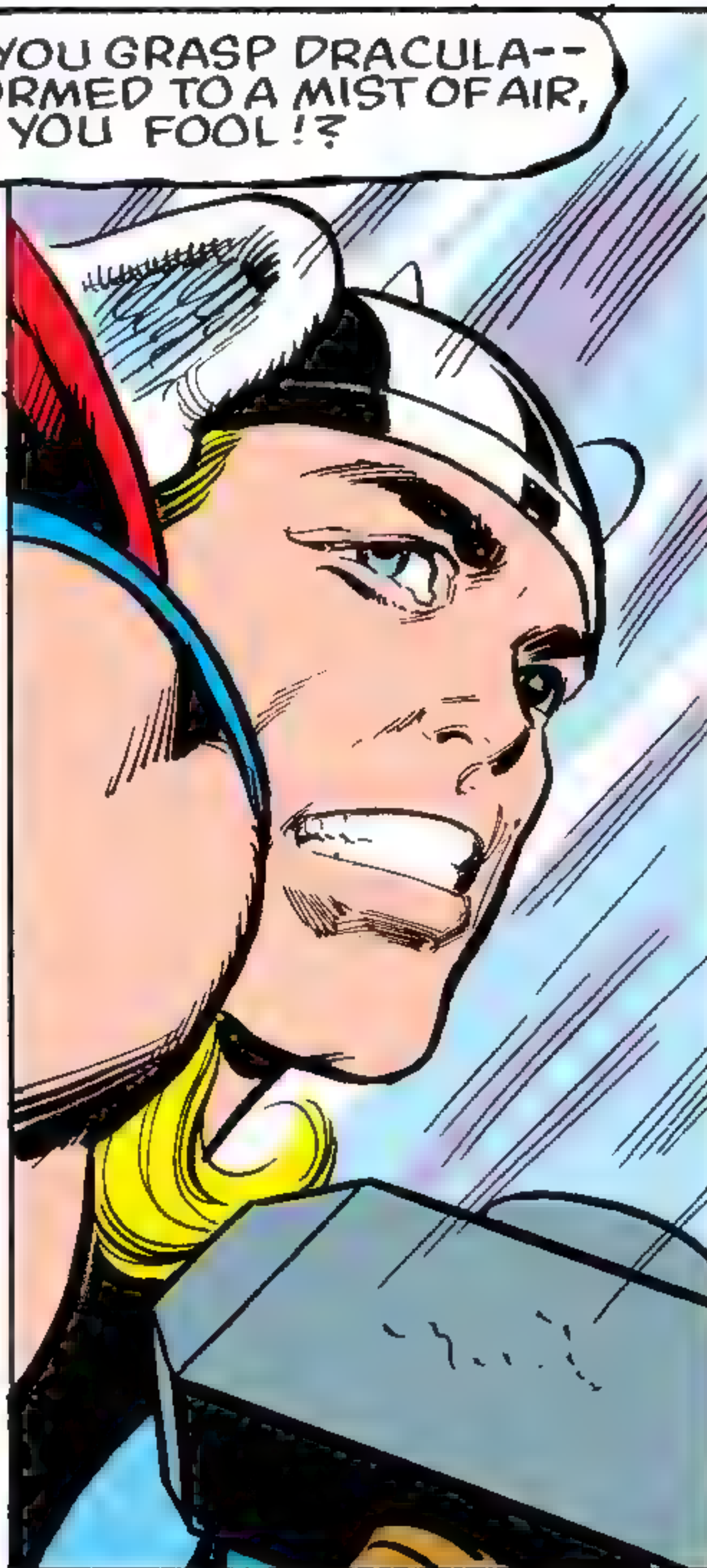
FOR I WOULD THRASH
YOU AND PUMMEL YOUR
UNHOLY FRAME!



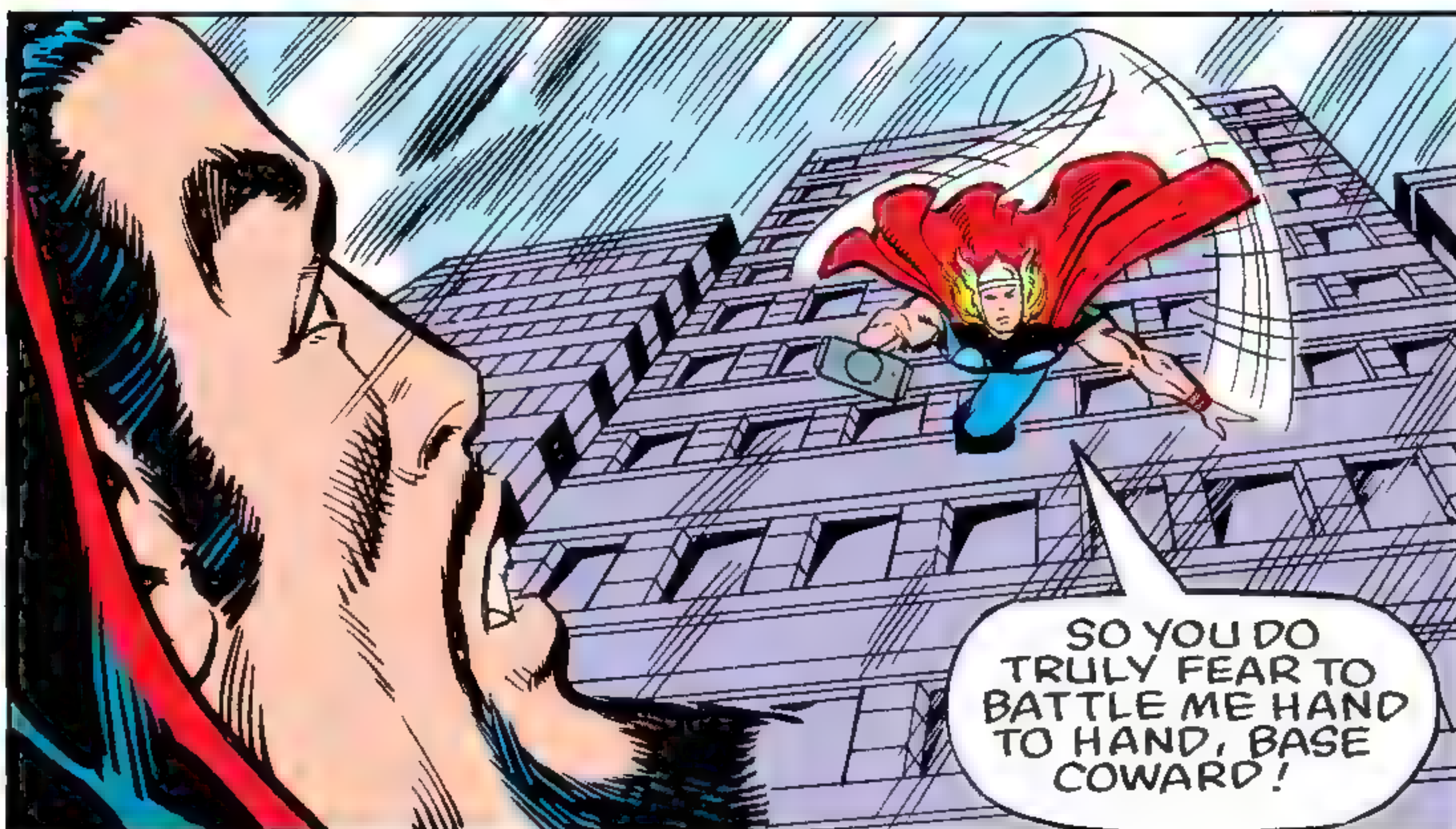
YOU ARE POWERFUL, THOR--

--BUT YOUR OVER-CONFIDENCE IS EMBARRASSING!

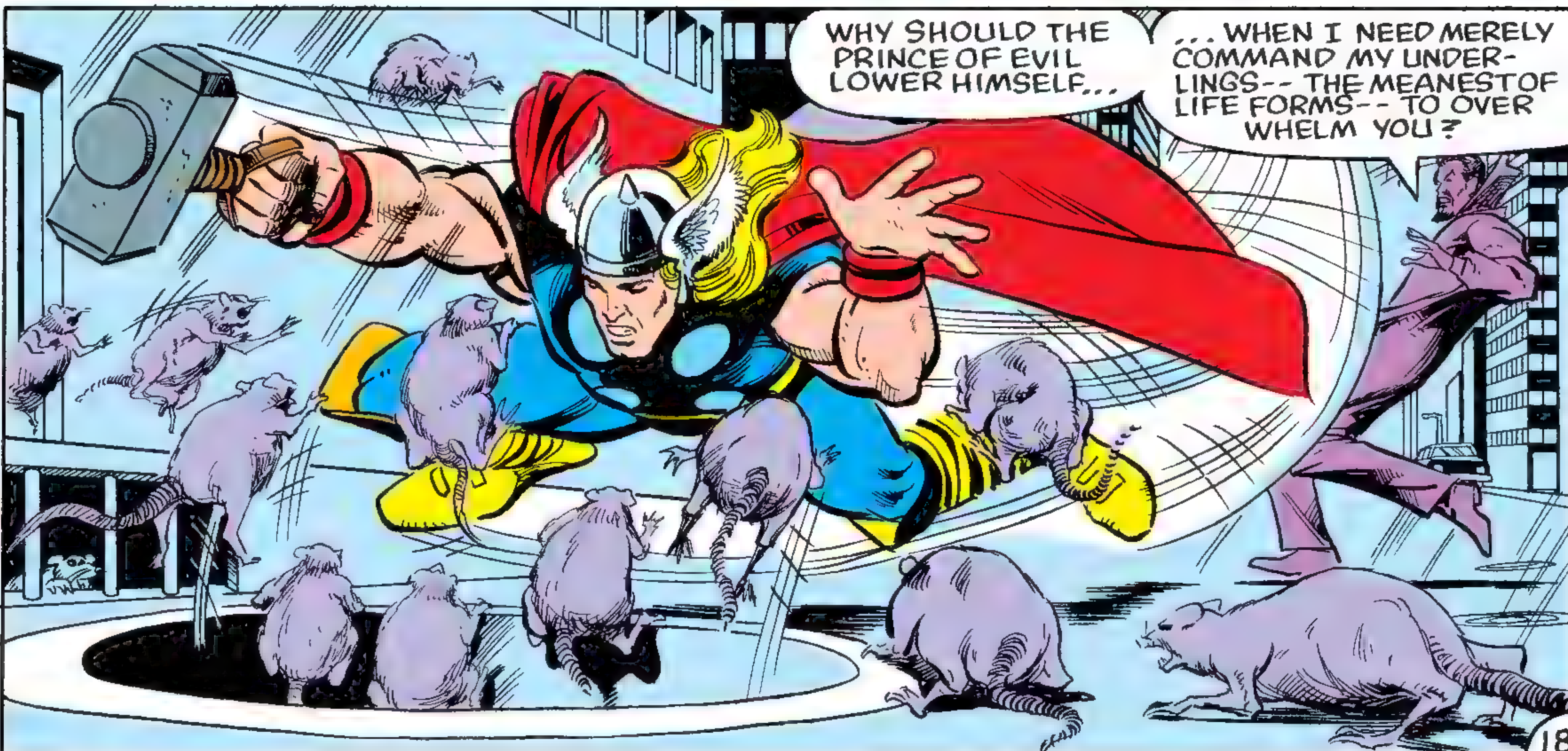
WOULD YOU GRASP DRACULA-- TRANSFORMED TO A MIST OF AIR, YOU FOOL!?



SUMMONING THE STORM HAS DRAINED ME OF MUCH STRENGTH-- CAN THE POWER OF SIF'S BLOOD BE WEAKENING IN MY VEINS!?

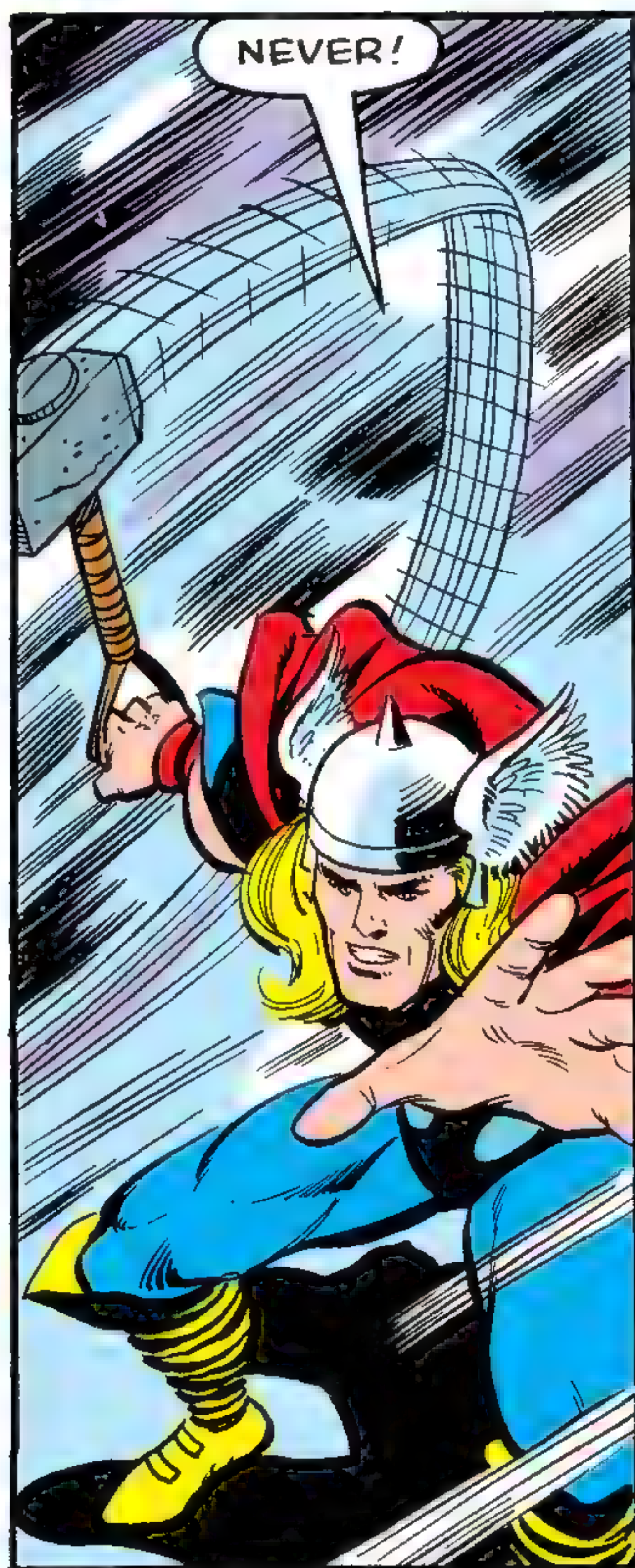
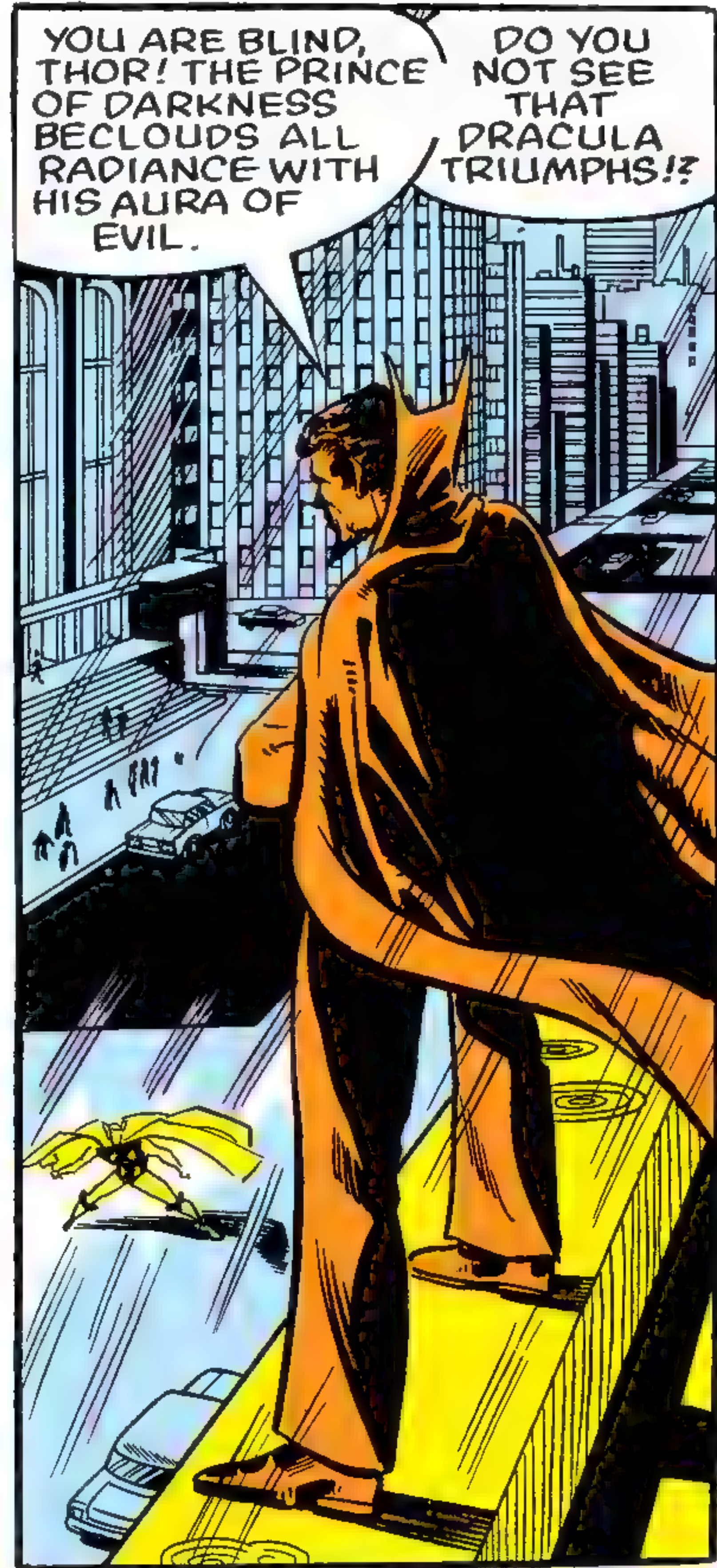
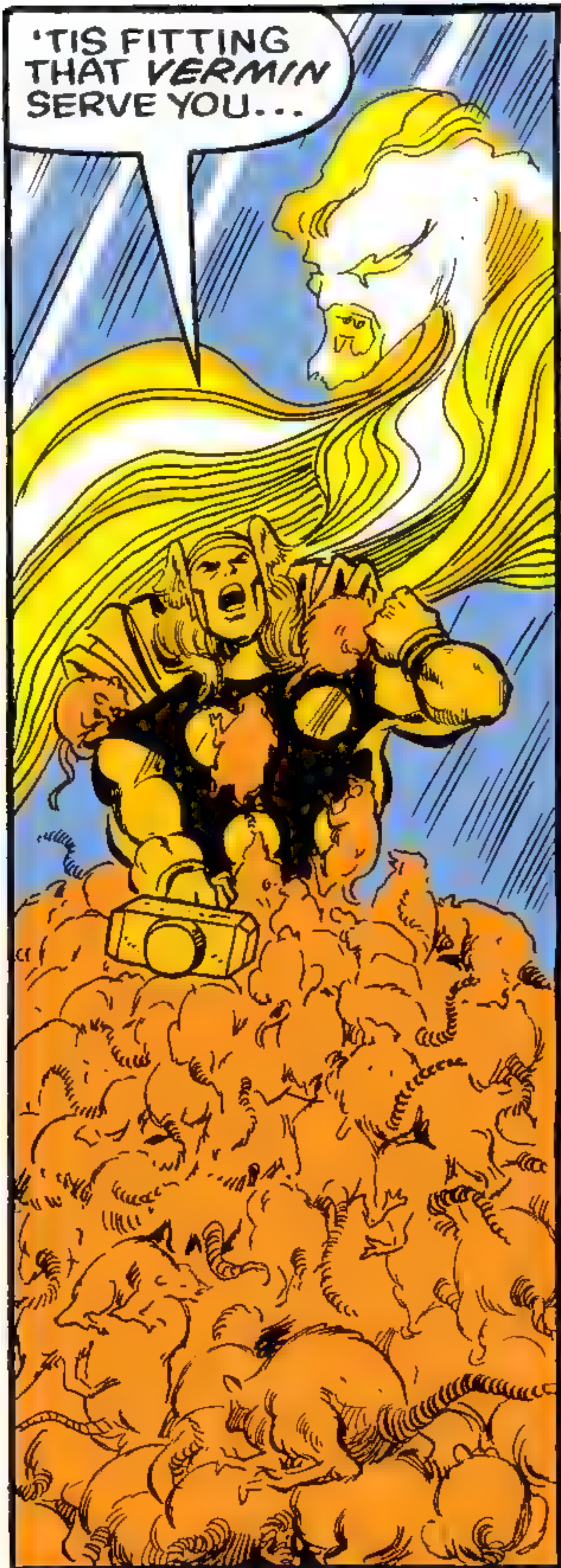


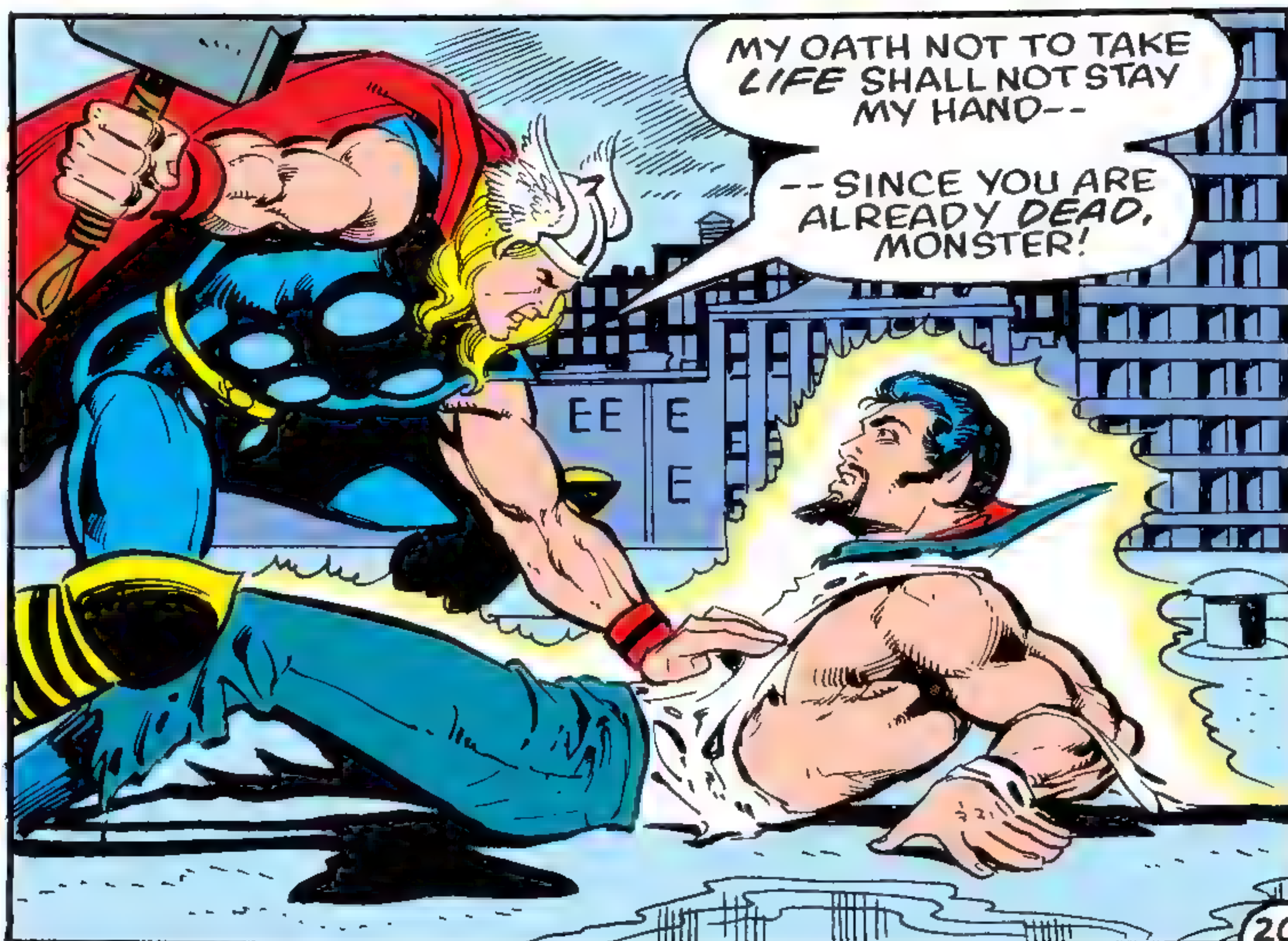
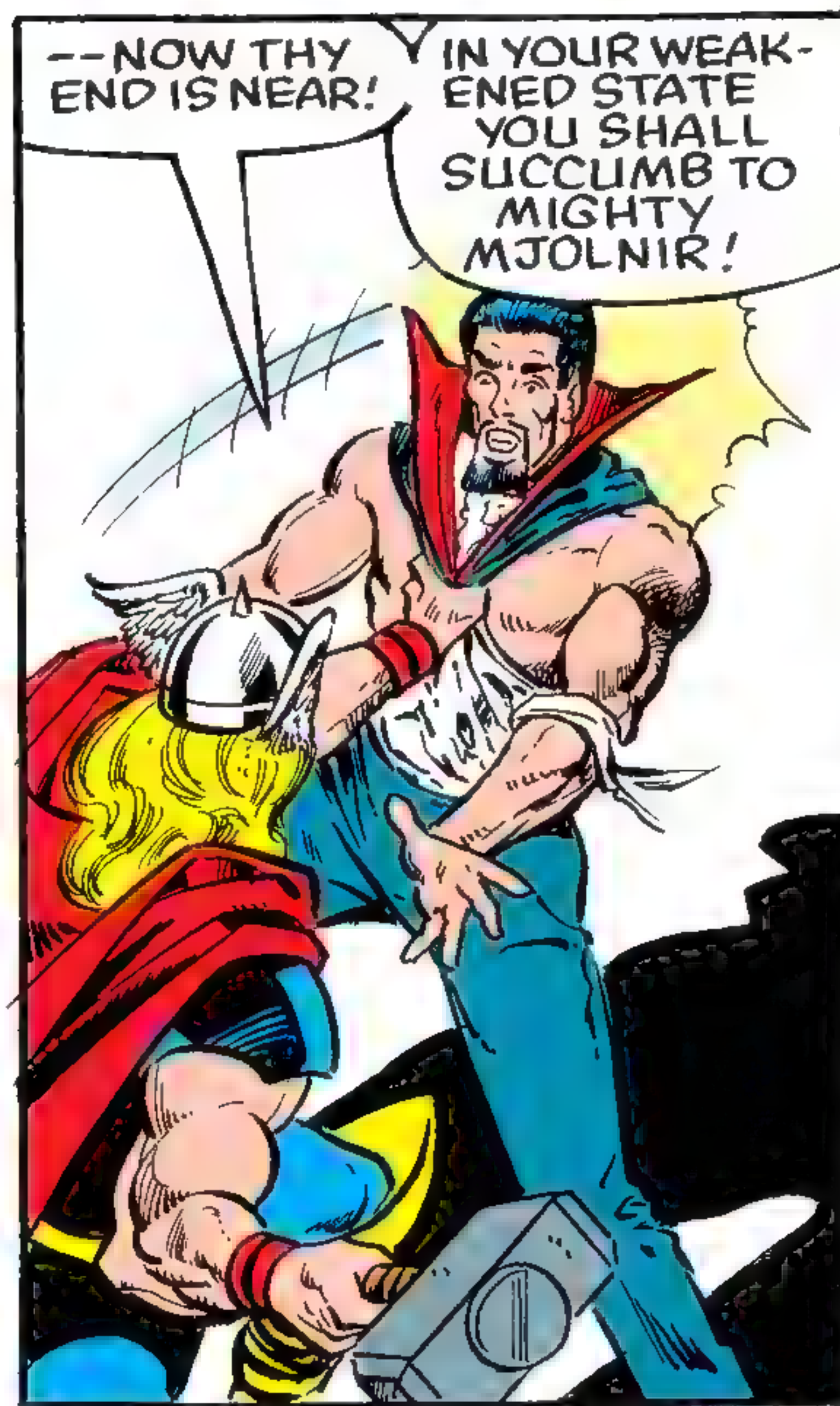
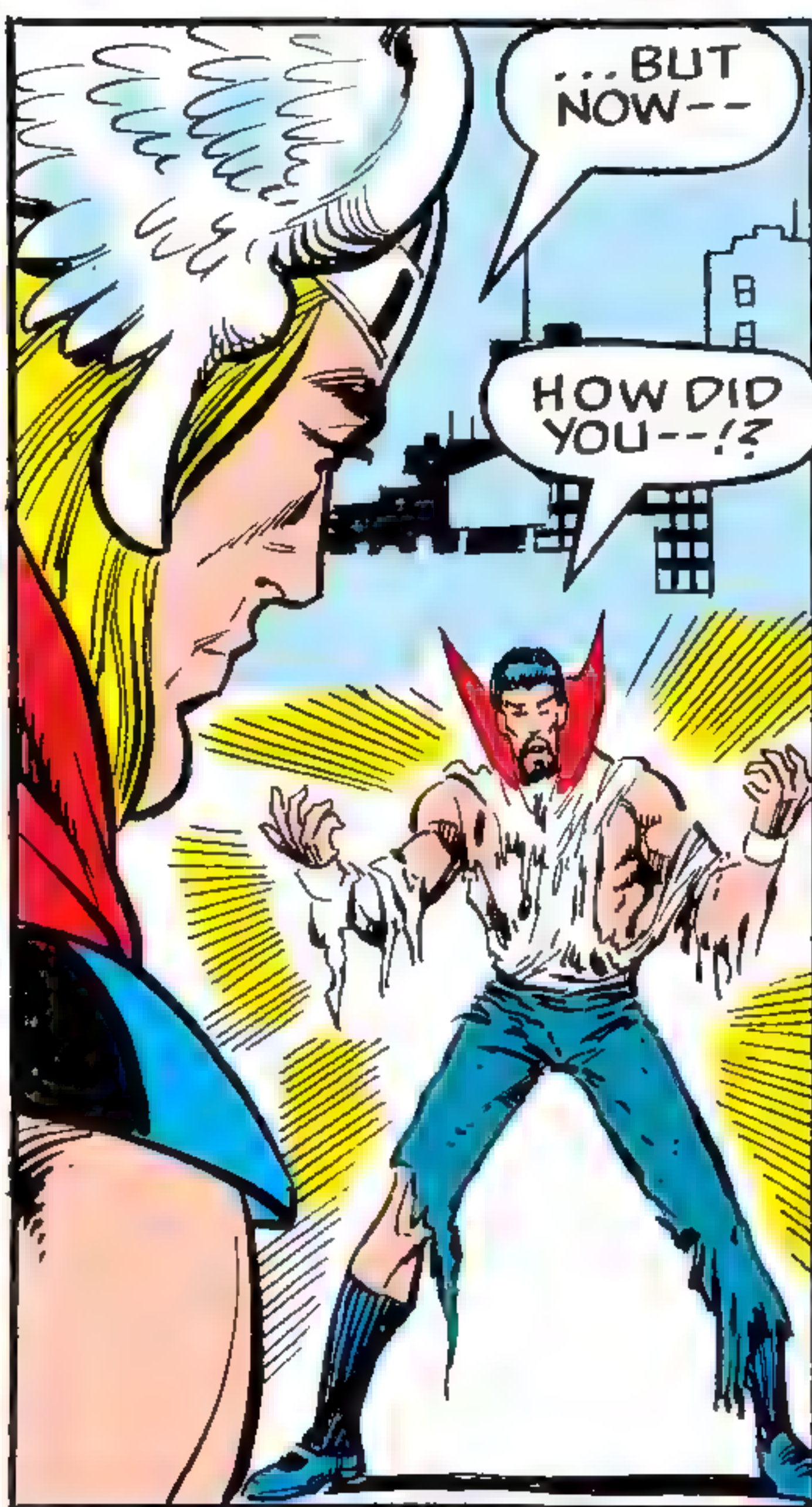
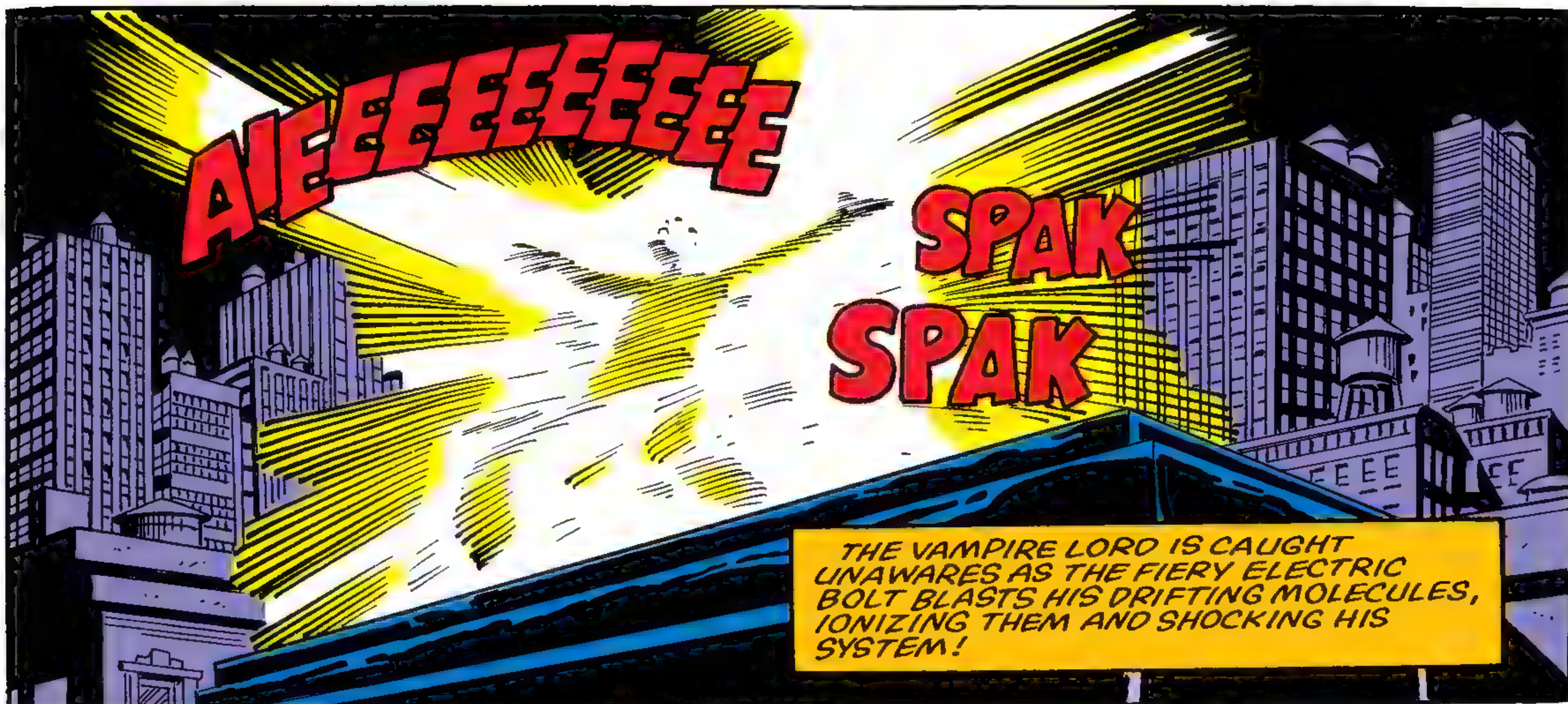
SO YOU DO TRULY FEAR TO BATTLE ME HAND TO HAND, BASE COWARD!

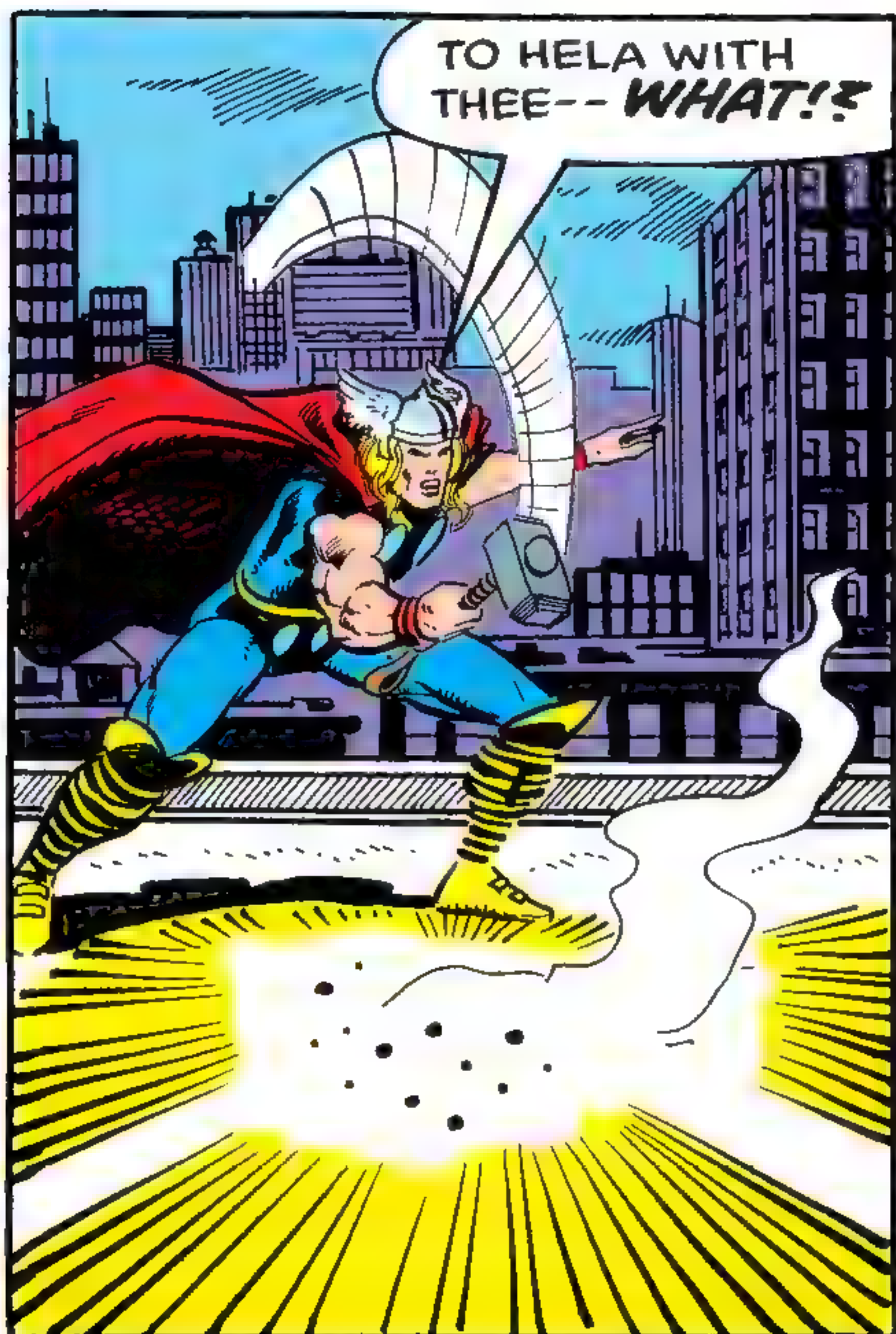


WHY SHOULD THE PRINCE OF EVIL LOWER HIMSELF...

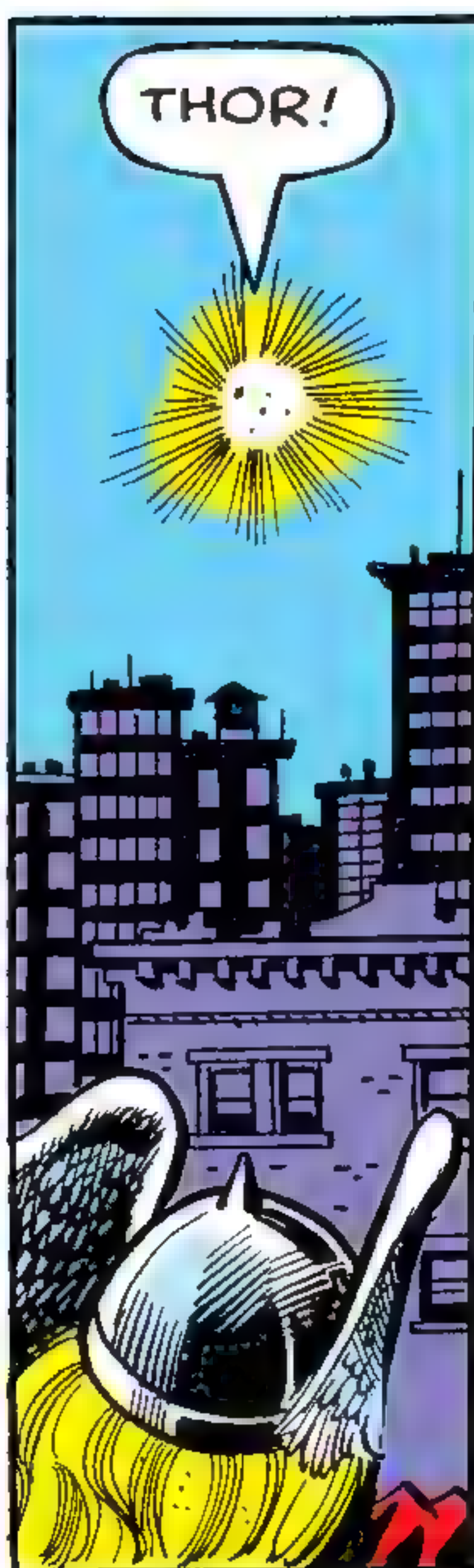
... WHEN I NEED MERELY COMMAND MY UNDER-LINGS-- THE MEANEST OF LIFE FORMS-- TO OVERWHELM YOU?



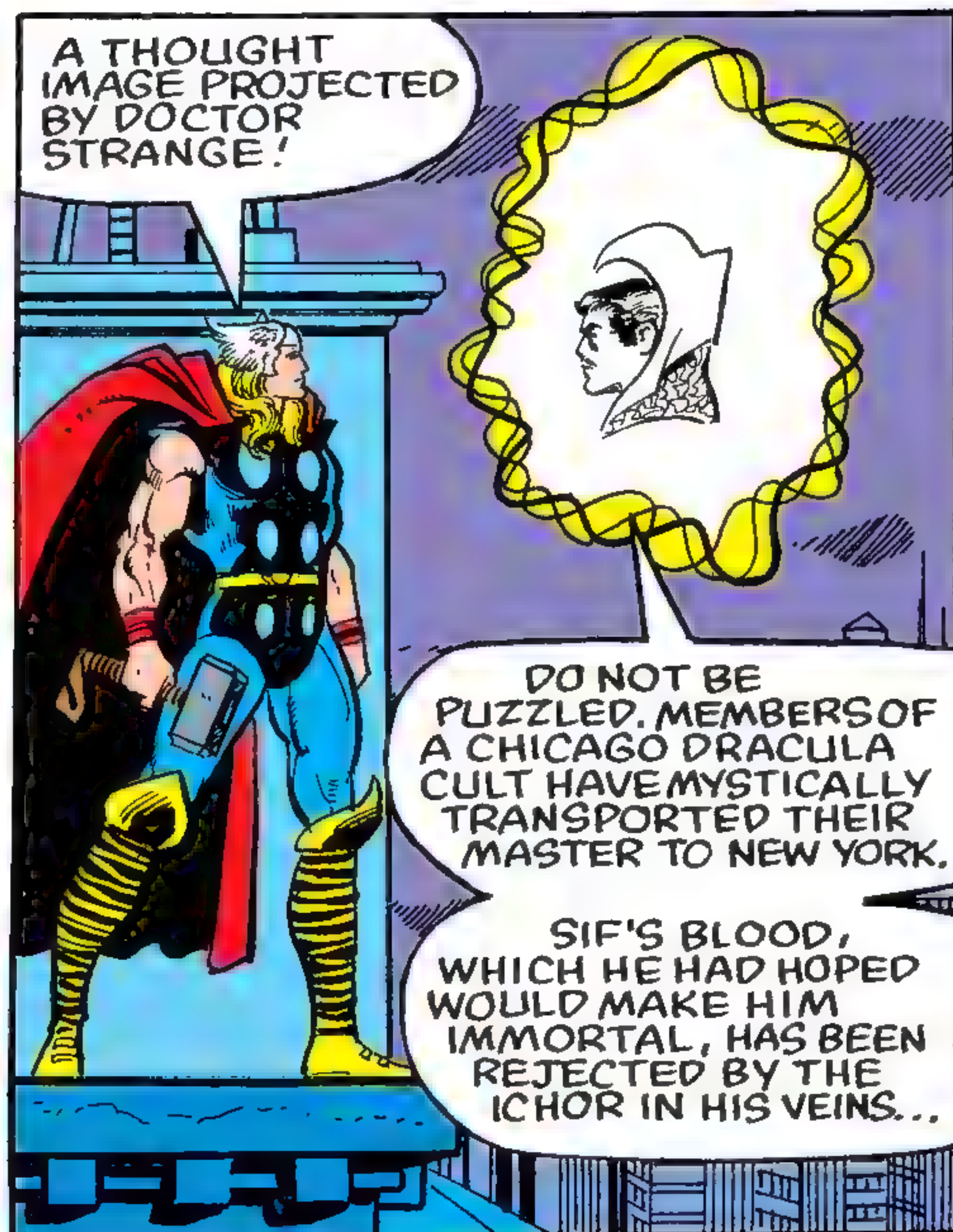




TO HELA WITH THEE-- **WHAT!?**



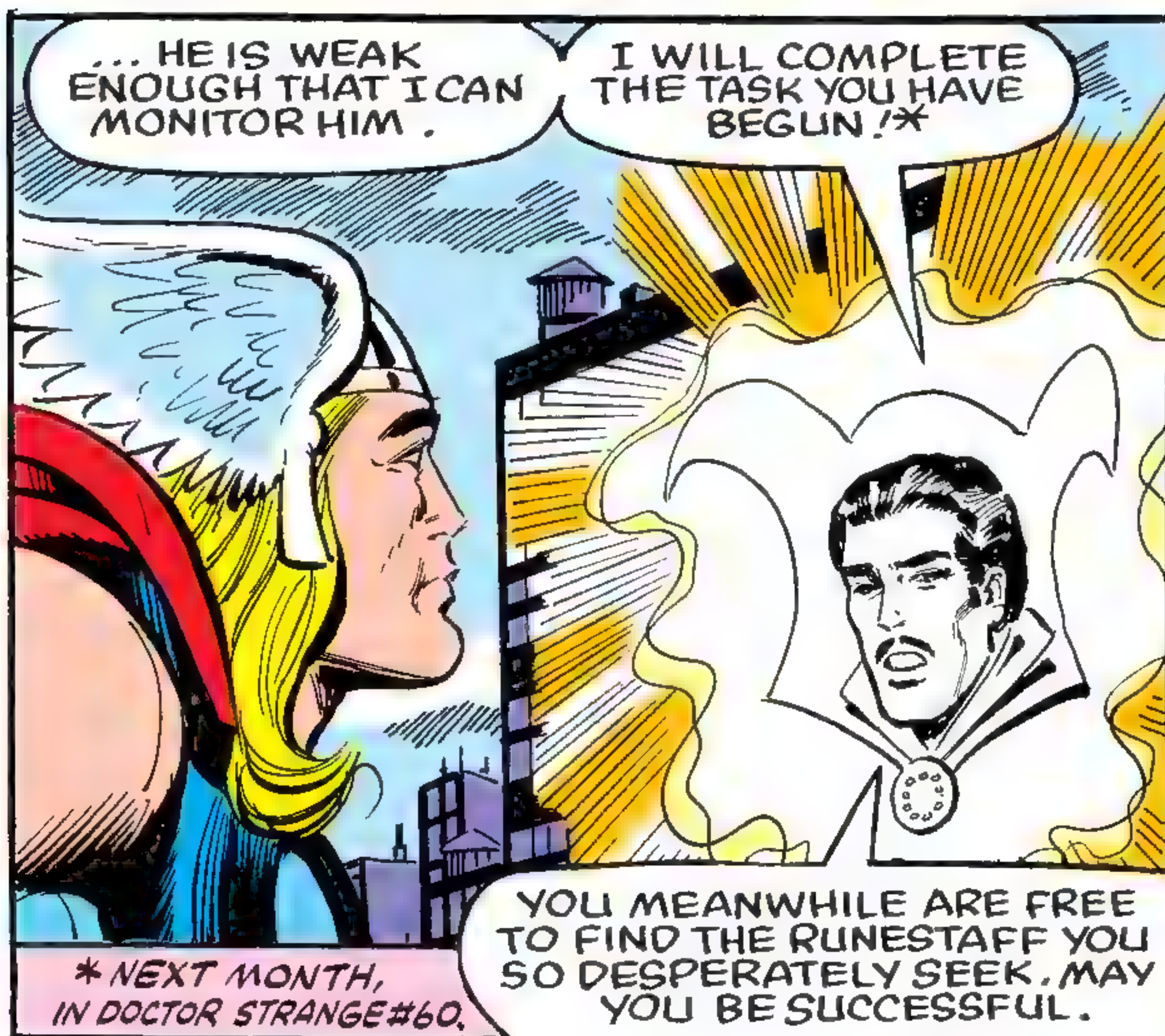
THOR!



A THOUGHT IMAGE PROJECTED BY DOCTOR STRANGE!

DO NOT BE PUZZLED. MEMBERS OF A CHICAGO DRACULA CULT HAVE MYSTICALLY TRANSPORTED THEIR MASTER TO NEW YORK.

SIF'S BLOOD, WHICH HE HAD HOPED WOULD MAKE HIM IMMORTAL, HAS BEEN REJECTED BY THE ICHOR IN HIS VEINS...



... HE IS WEAK ENOUGH THAT I CAN MONITOR HIM.

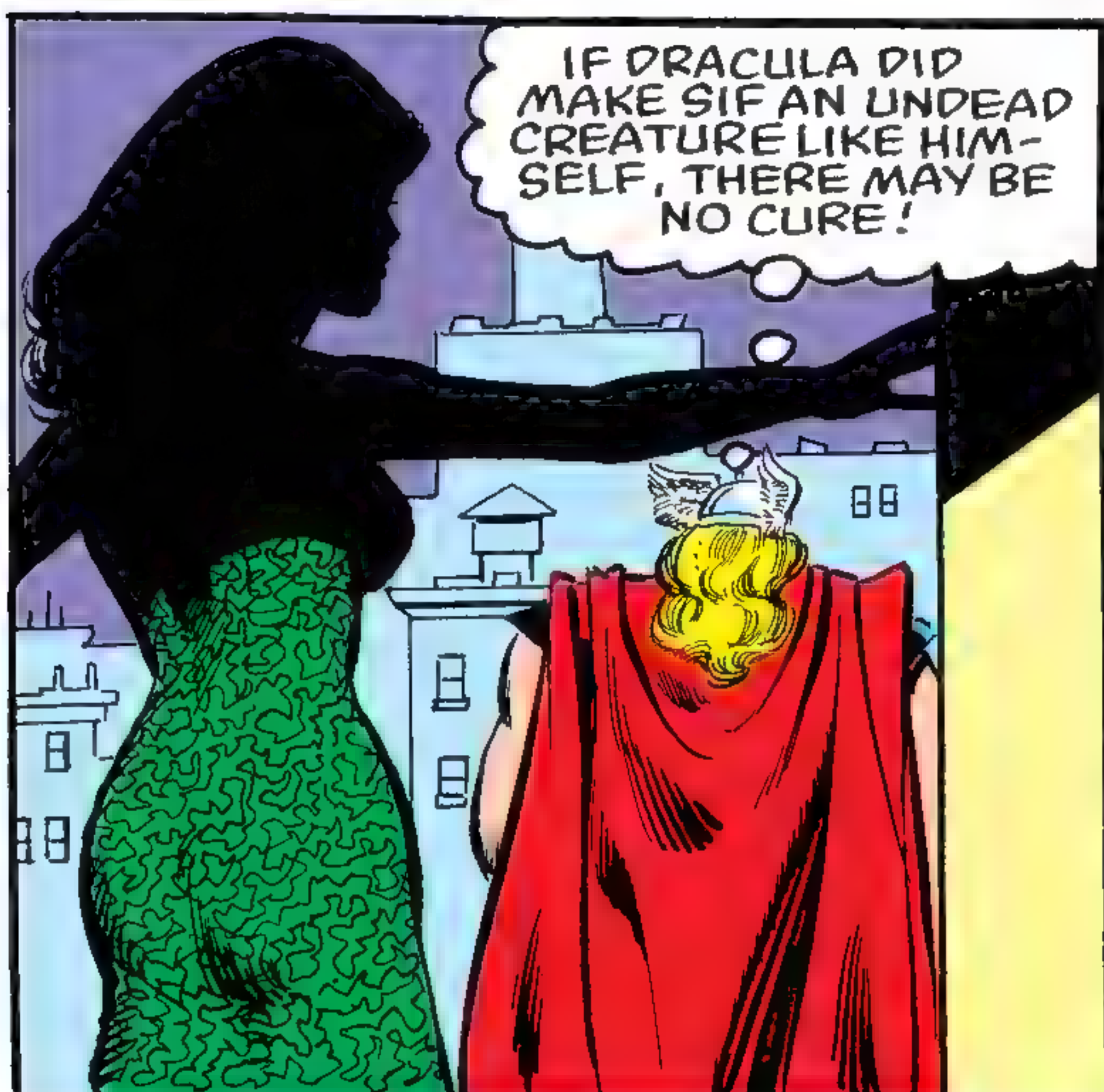
I WILL COMPLETE THE TASK YOU HAVE BEGUN!*

YOU MEANWHILE ARE FREE TO FIND THE RUNESTAFF YOU SO DESPERATELY SEEK. MAY YOU BE SUCCESSFUL.

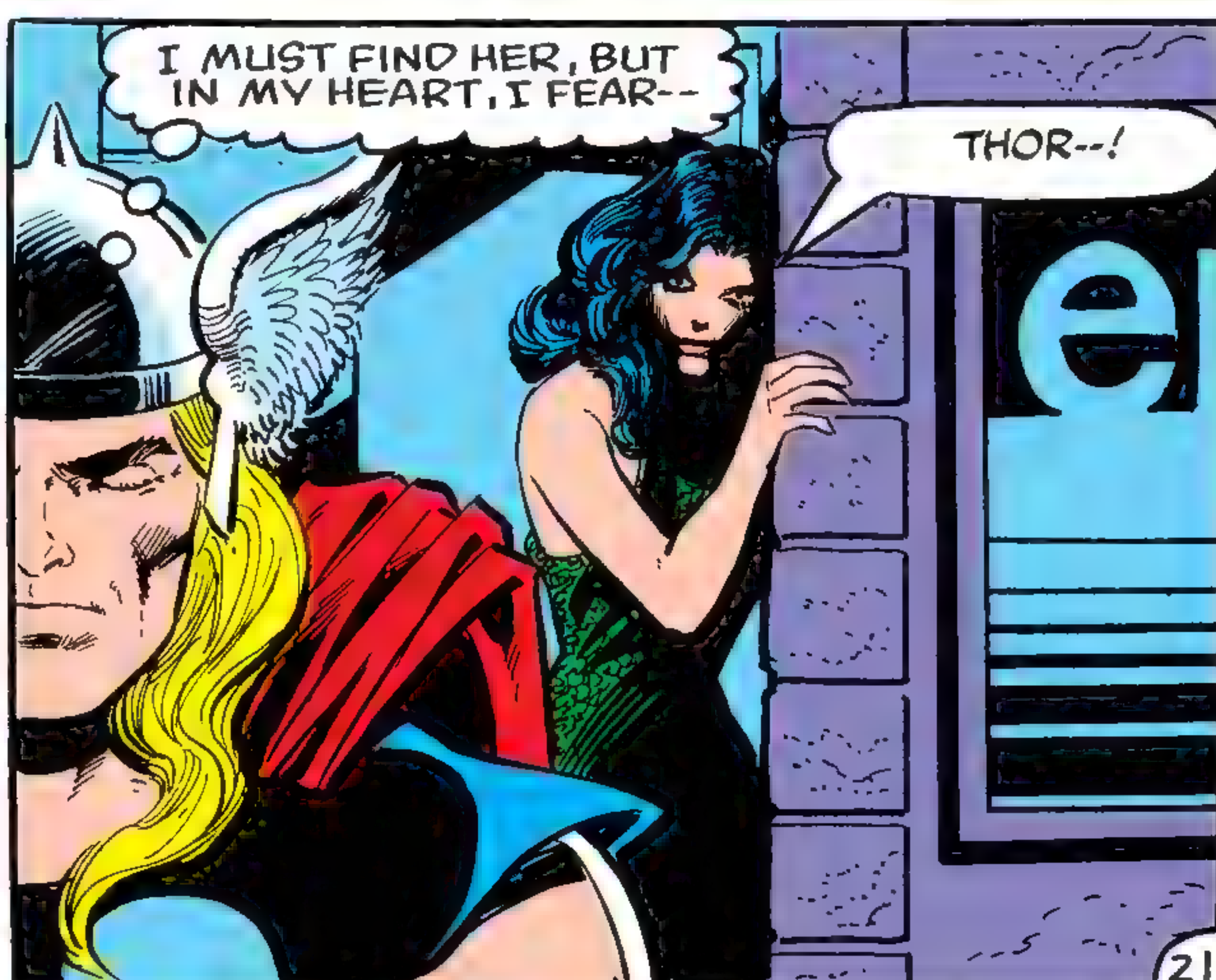
*NEXT MONTH, IN DOCTOR STRANGE #60.



WAIT! WHAT OF MY GODDESS SIF--!?

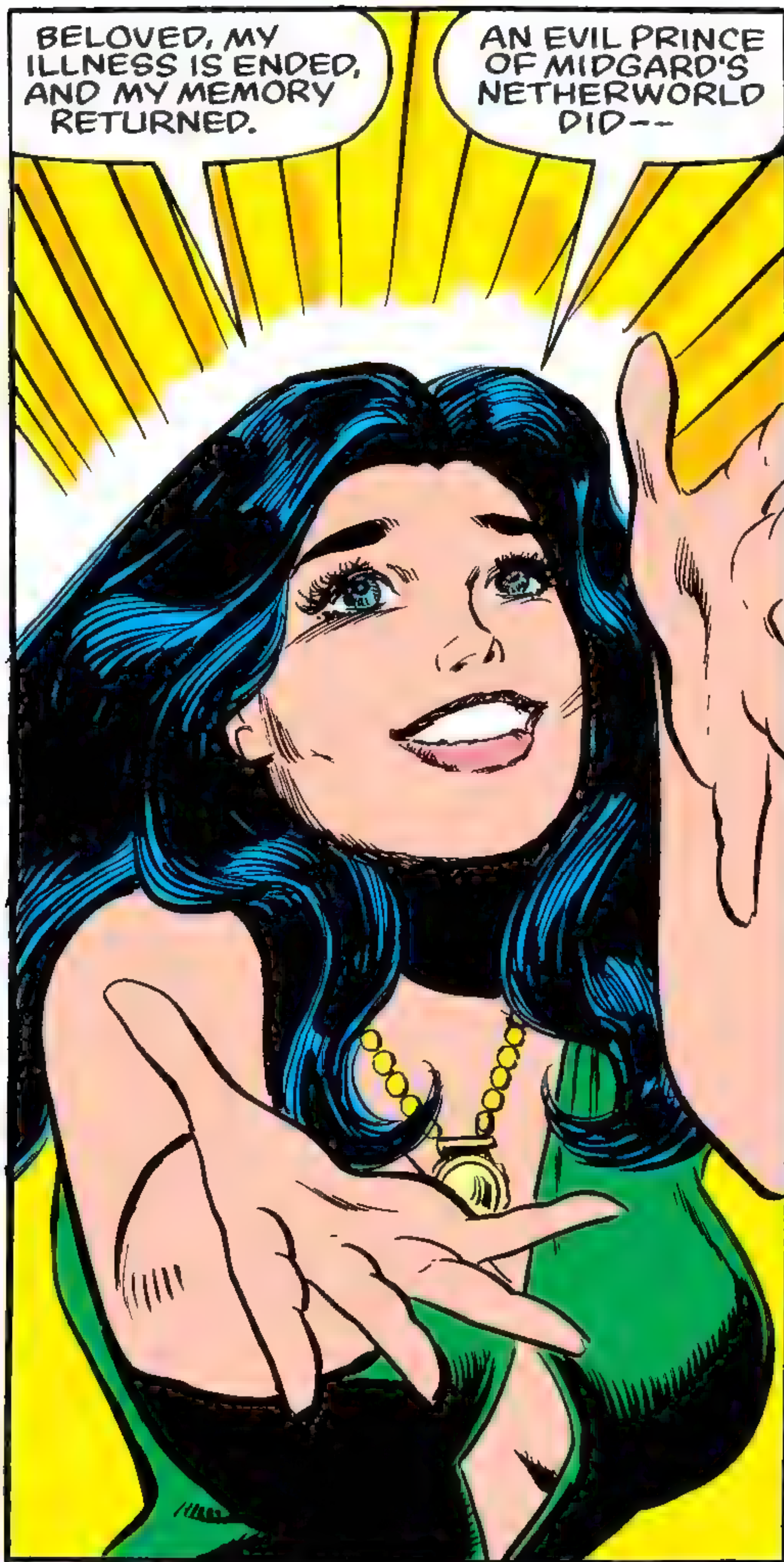


IF DRACULA DID MAKE SIF AN UNDEAD CREATURE LIKE HIMSELF, THERE MAY BE NO CURE!



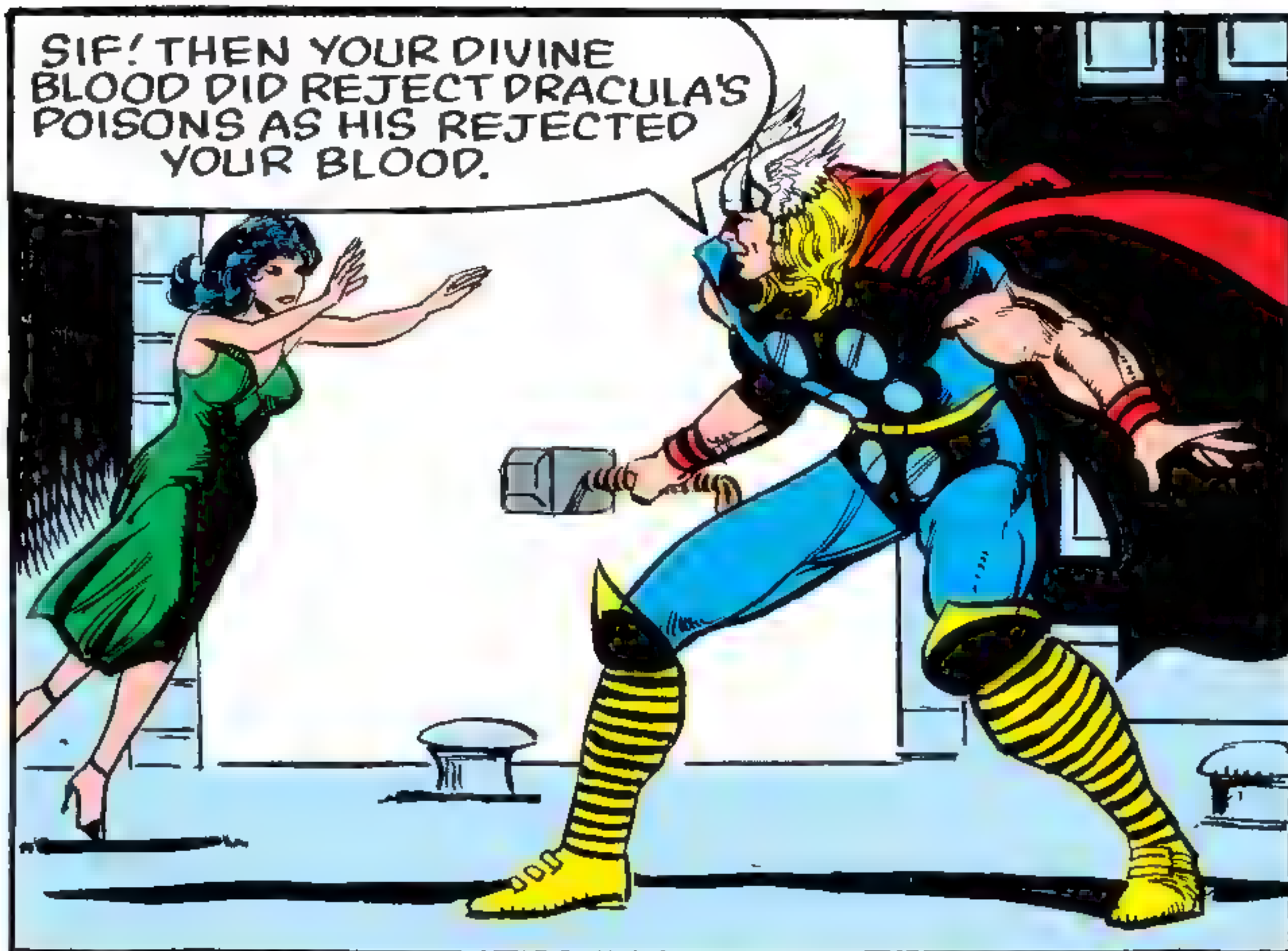
I MUST FIND HER, BUT IN MY HEART, I FEAR--

THOR--!

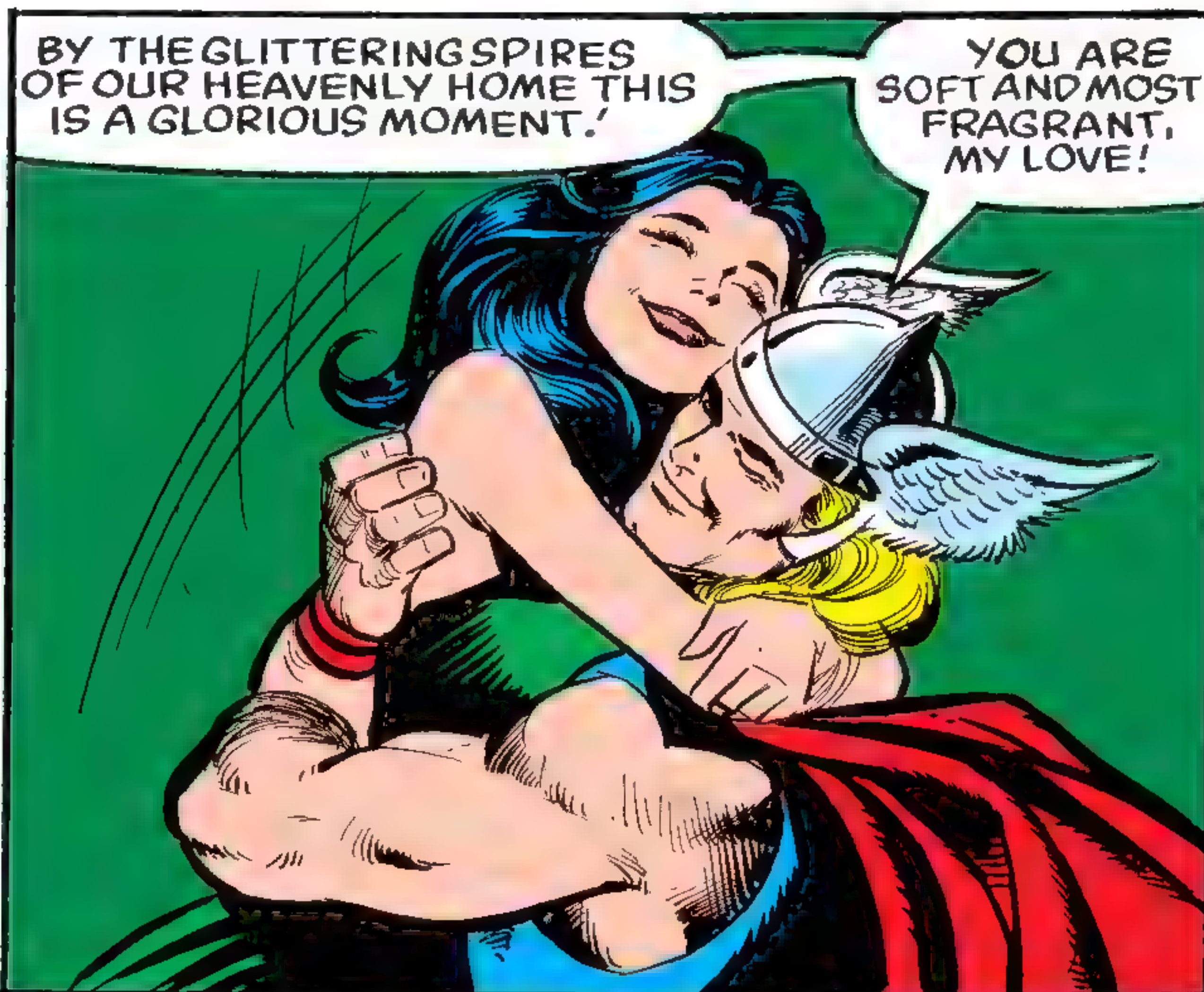


BELOVED, MY ILLNESS IS ENDED, AND MY MEMORY RETURNED.

AN EVIL PRINCE OF MIDGARD'S NETHERWORLD DID---



SIF! THEN YOUR DIVINE BLOOD DID REJECT DRACULA'S POISONS AS HIS REJECTED YOUR BLOOD.



BY THE GLITTERING SPIRES OF OUR HEAVENLY HOME THIS IS A GLORIOUS MOMENT!

YOU ARE SOFT AND MOST FRAGRANT, MY LOVE!



BUT ONE TASK YET REMAINS.

WE MUST PREPARE TO DEPART ONCE MORE TO ATTAIN THE RUNESTAFF WHICH DOCTOR STRANGE HAS LOCATED BACK ON KAMO THARNN'S PLANET FAR OUT IN SPACE.



THE HOME OF KAMO THARNN IS TREACHEROUS AND INHOSPITABLE, AND HE HIMSELF A MAD AND POWERFUL BEING.

BUT THY WARRIOR GODDESS LONGS TO WIELD HER BLADE. WHENEVER THOU ART READY, I AM PREPARED.

THE QUEST BEGINS!

NEXT

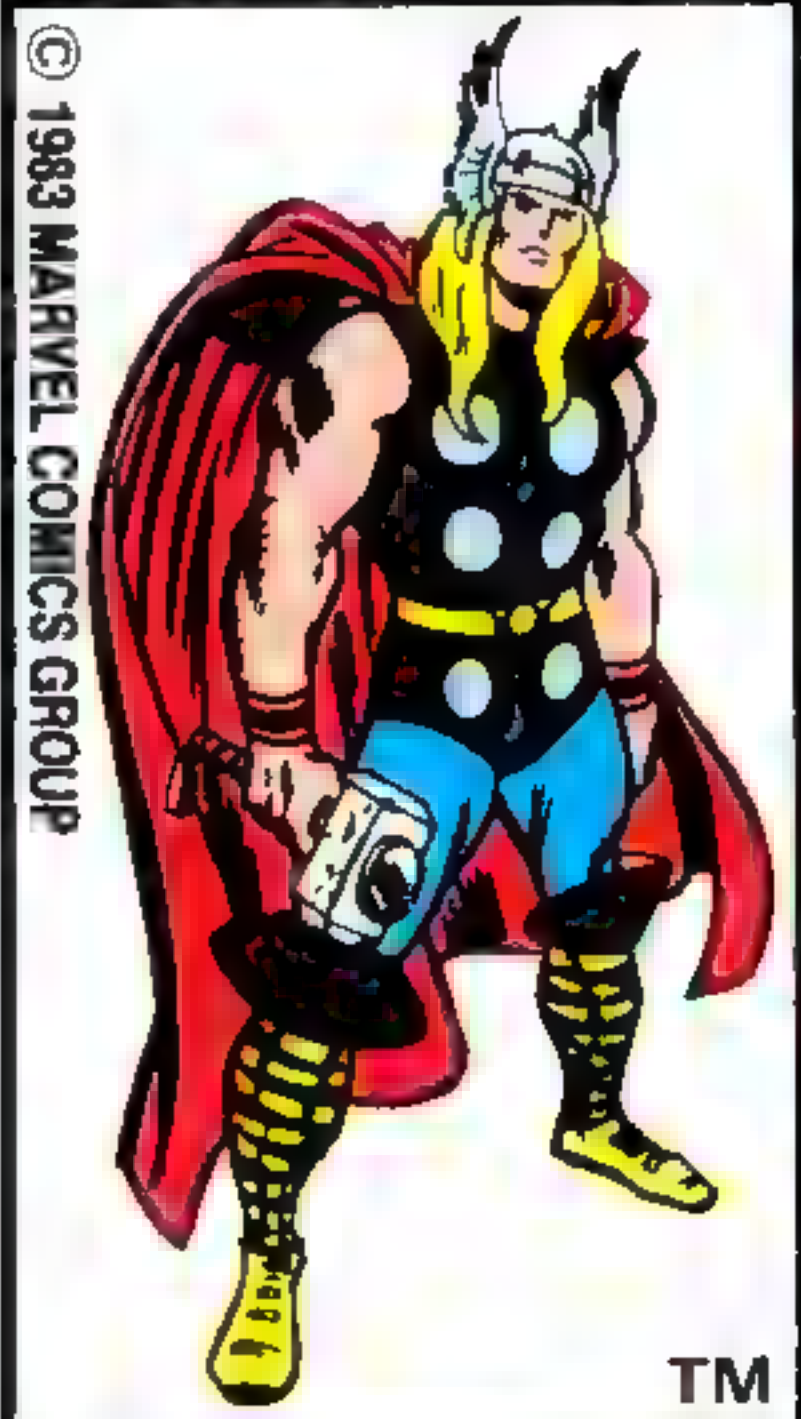
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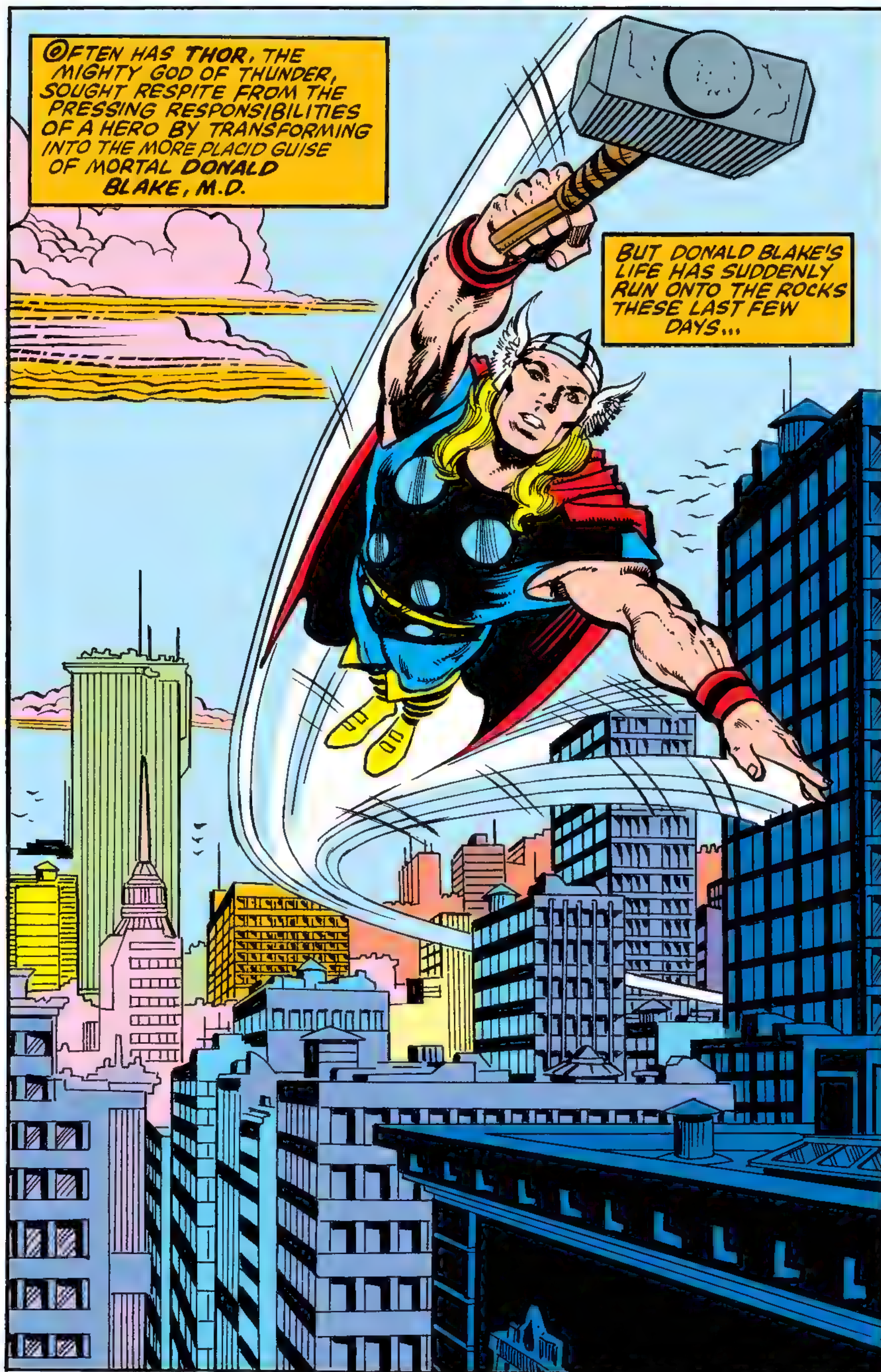


THE MIGHTY THOR



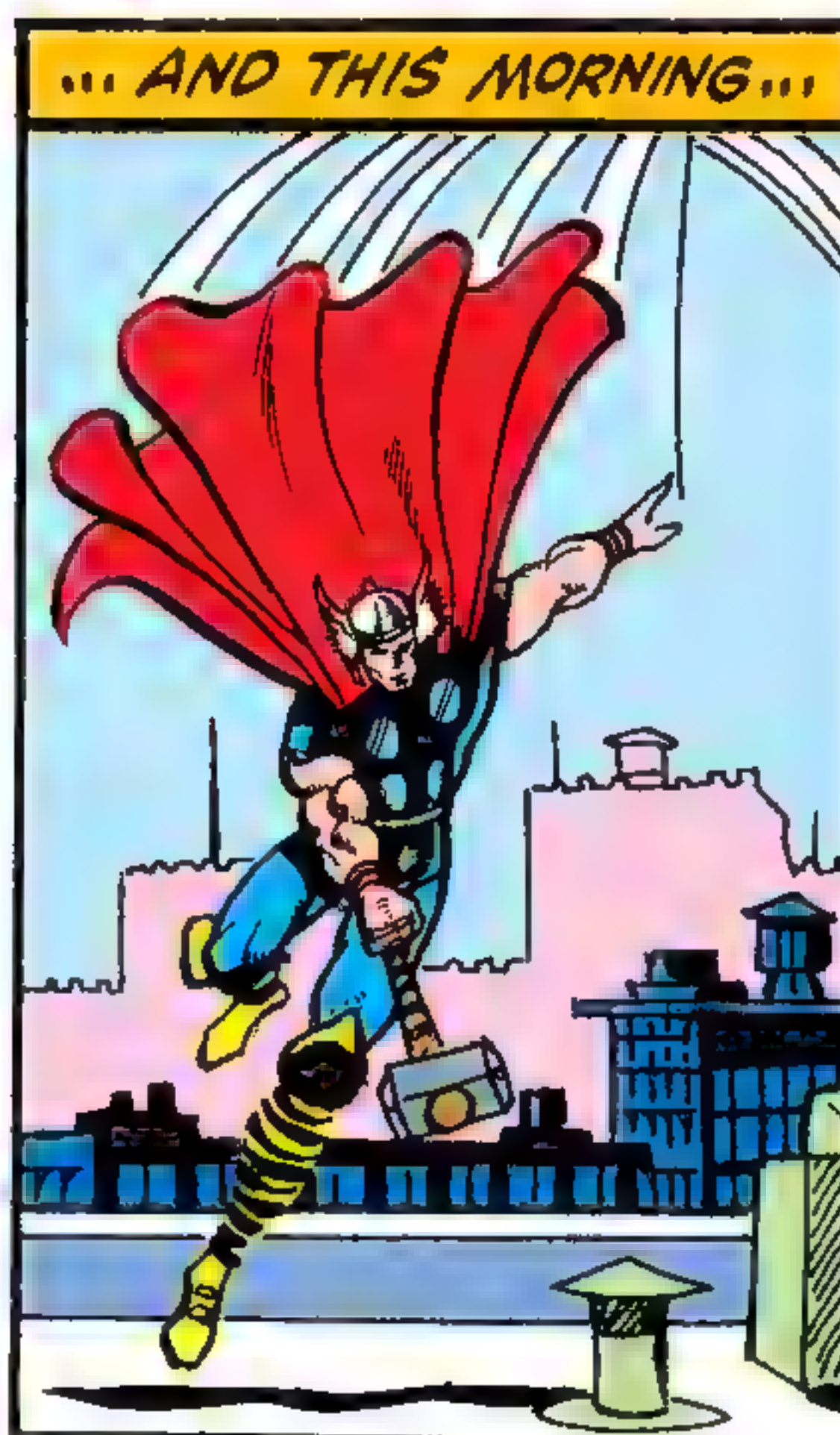
STAN LEE PRESENTS THE MIGHTY THOR IN...

RUNNERS

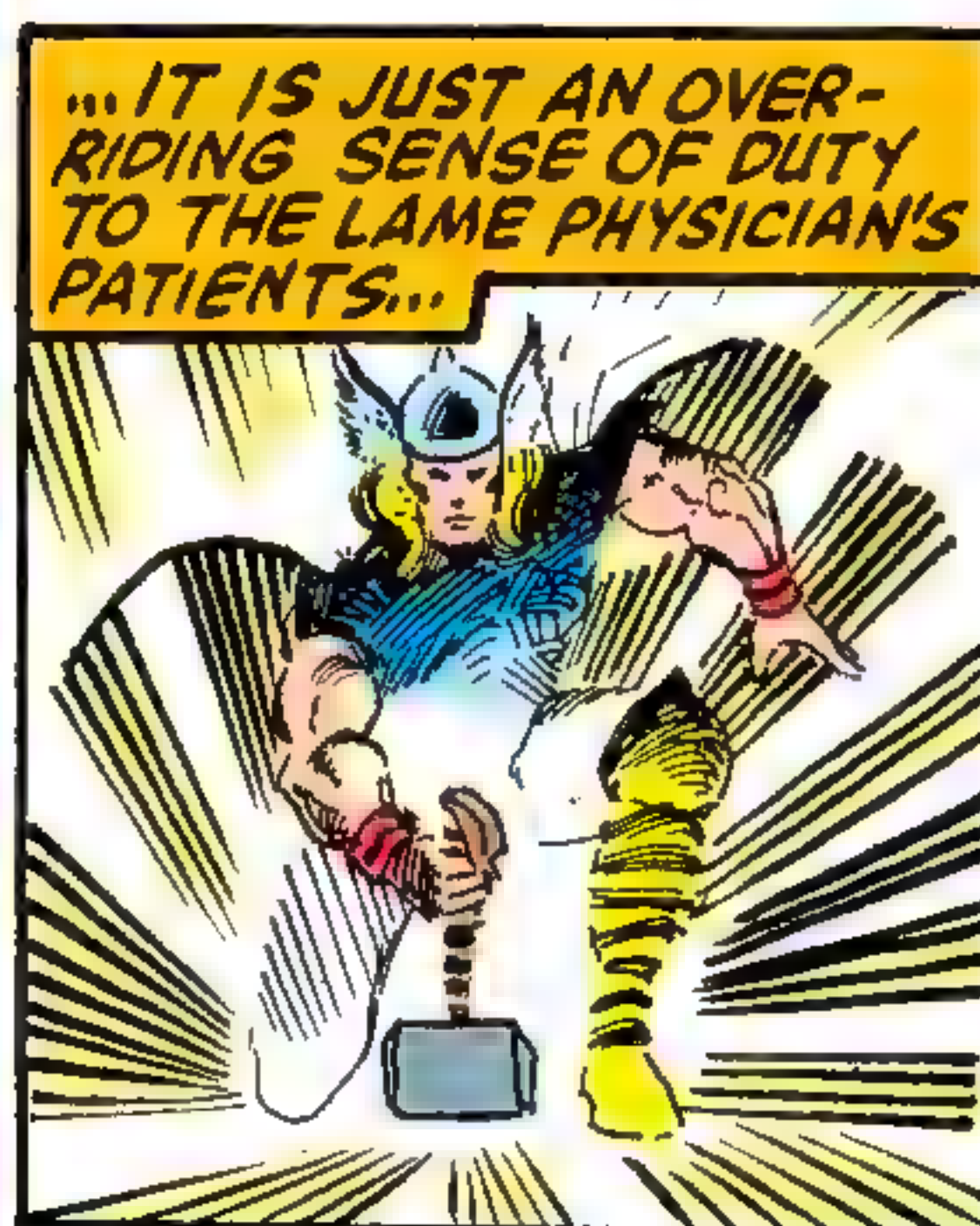


OFTEN HAS THOR, THE MIGHTY GOD OF THUNDER, SOUGHT RESPIRE FROM THE PRESSING RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HERO BY TRANSFORMING INTO THE MORE PLACID GUISE OF MORTAL DONALD BLAKE, M.D.

BUT DONALD BLAKE'S LIFE HAS SUDDENLY RUN ONTO THE ROCKS THESE LAST FEW DAYS...



... AND THIS MORNING...



... IT IS JUST AN OVER-RIDING SENSE OF DUTY TO THE LAME PHYSICIAN'S PATIENTS...



... THAT PROMPTS THE THUNDER GOD'S TRANSFORMATION AT ALL.

ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPER

MARK BRIGHT
PENCILER

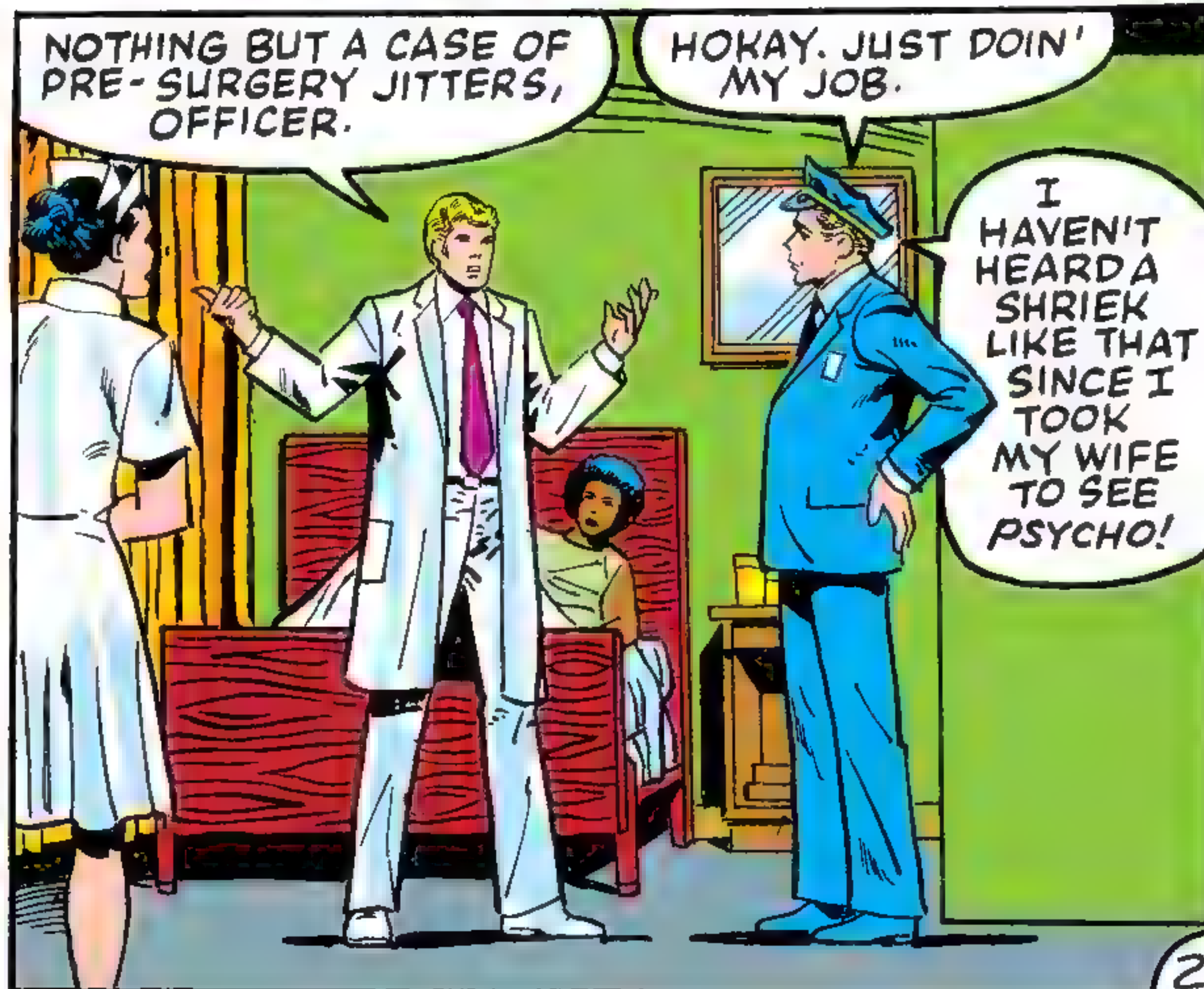
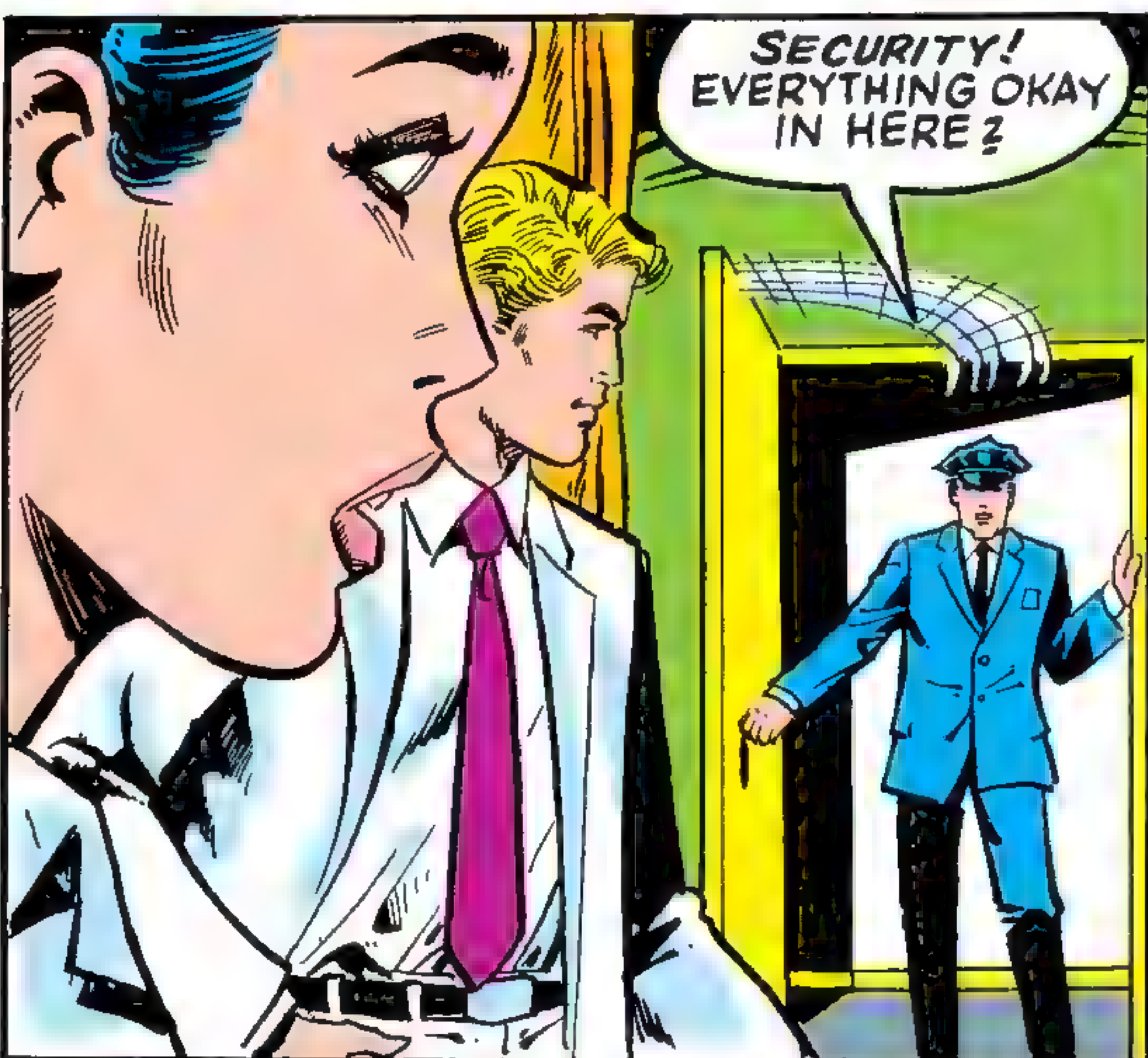
VINNIE COLLETTA
INKER

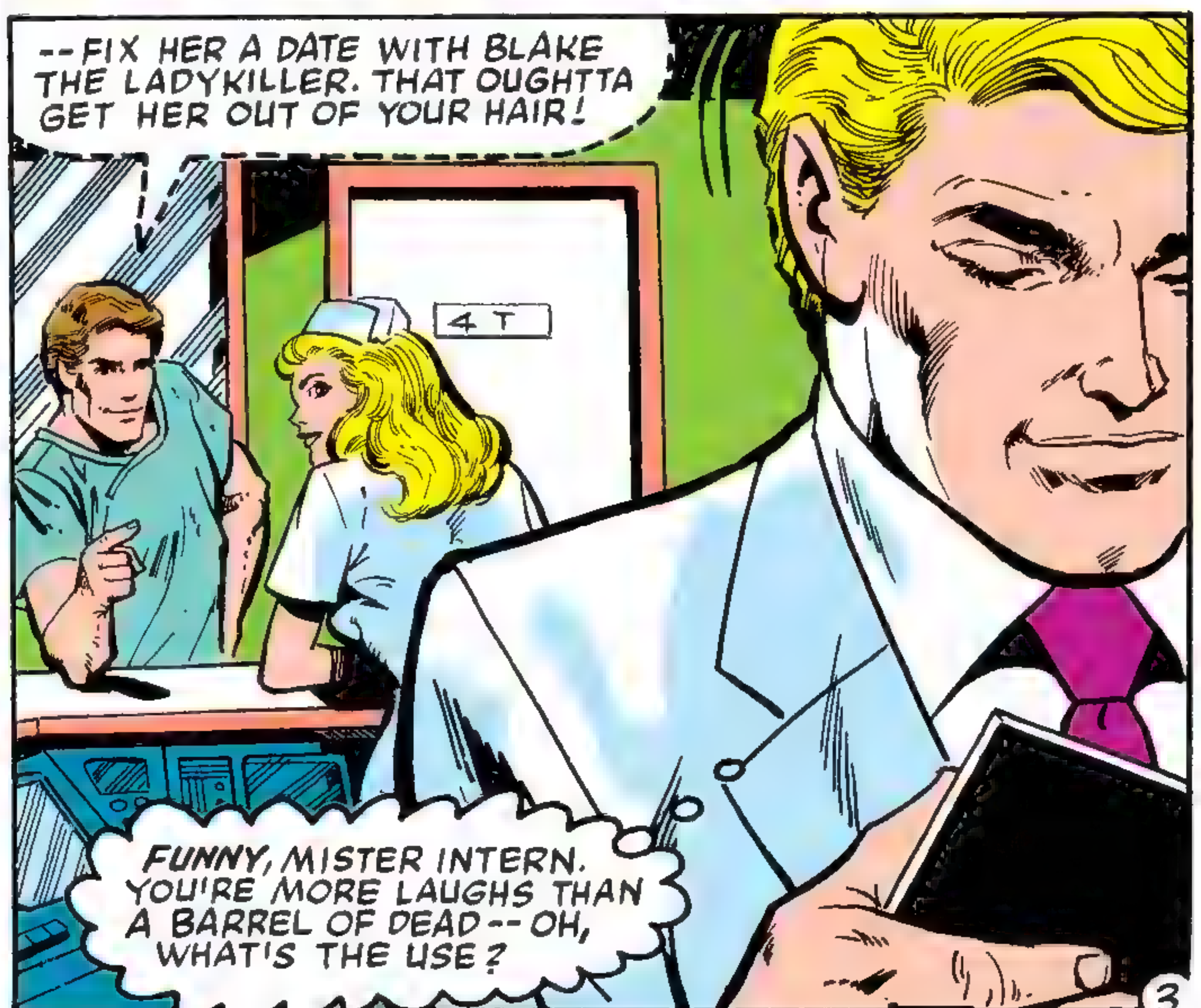
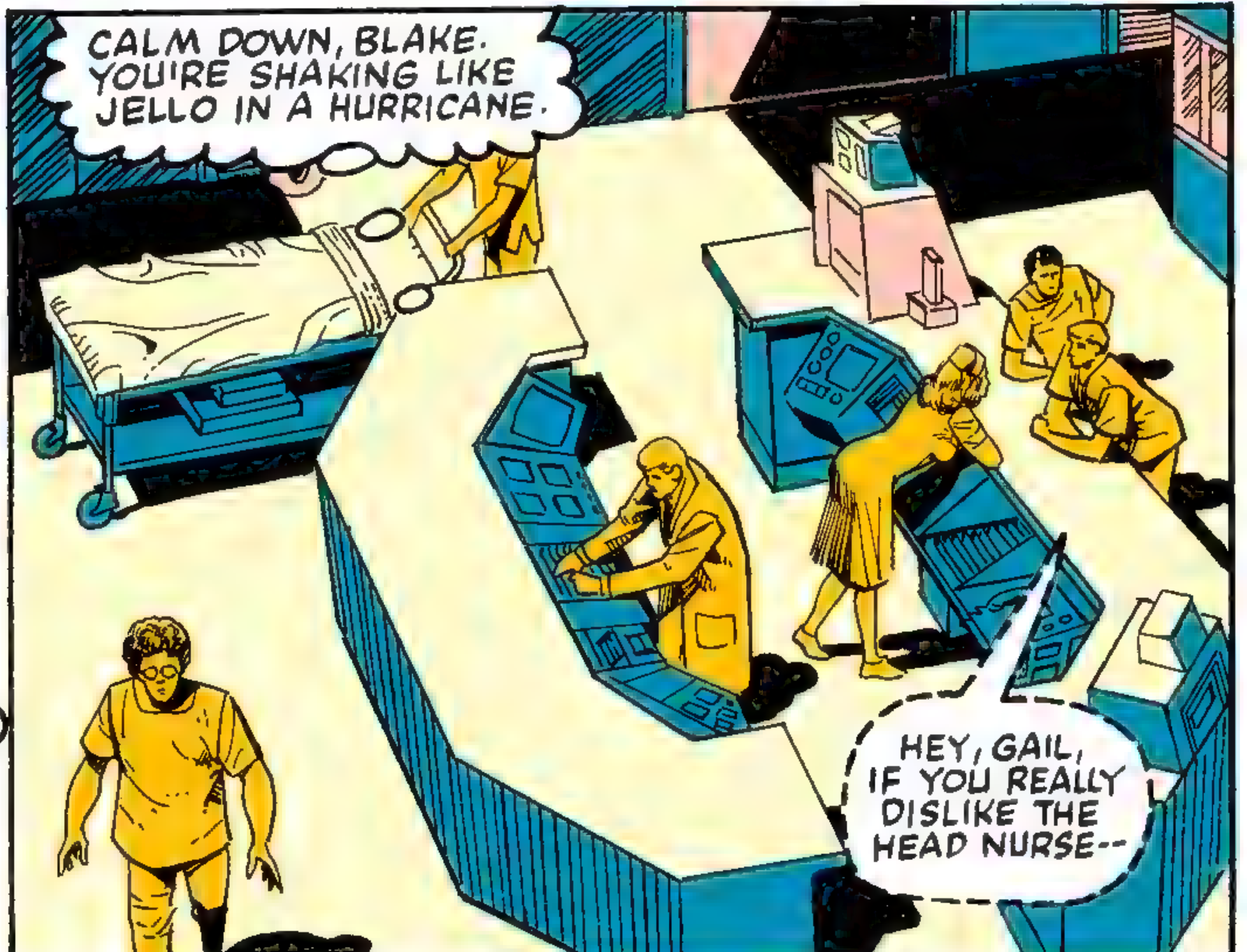
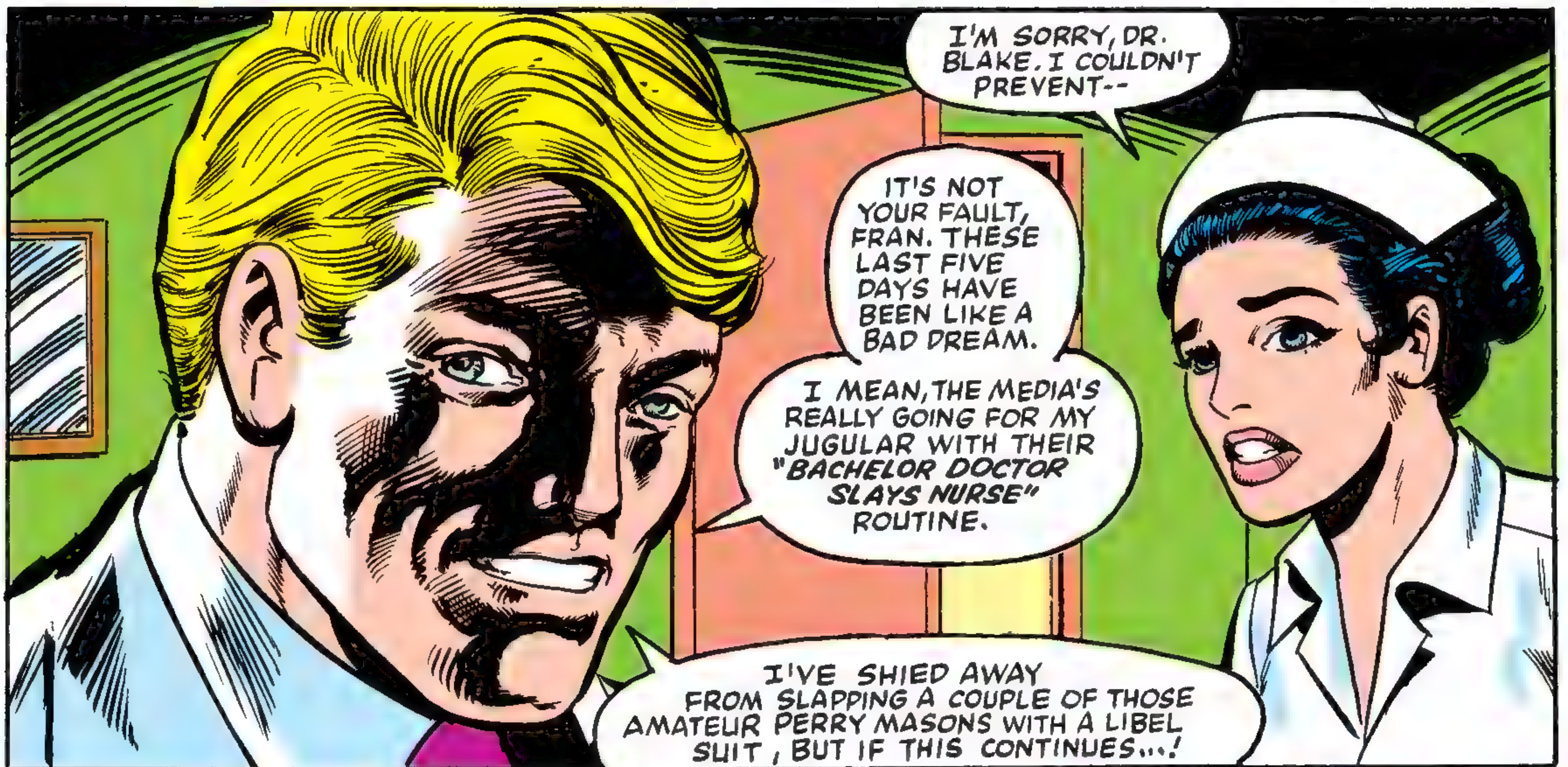
JOHN MORELLI
LETTERER

GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

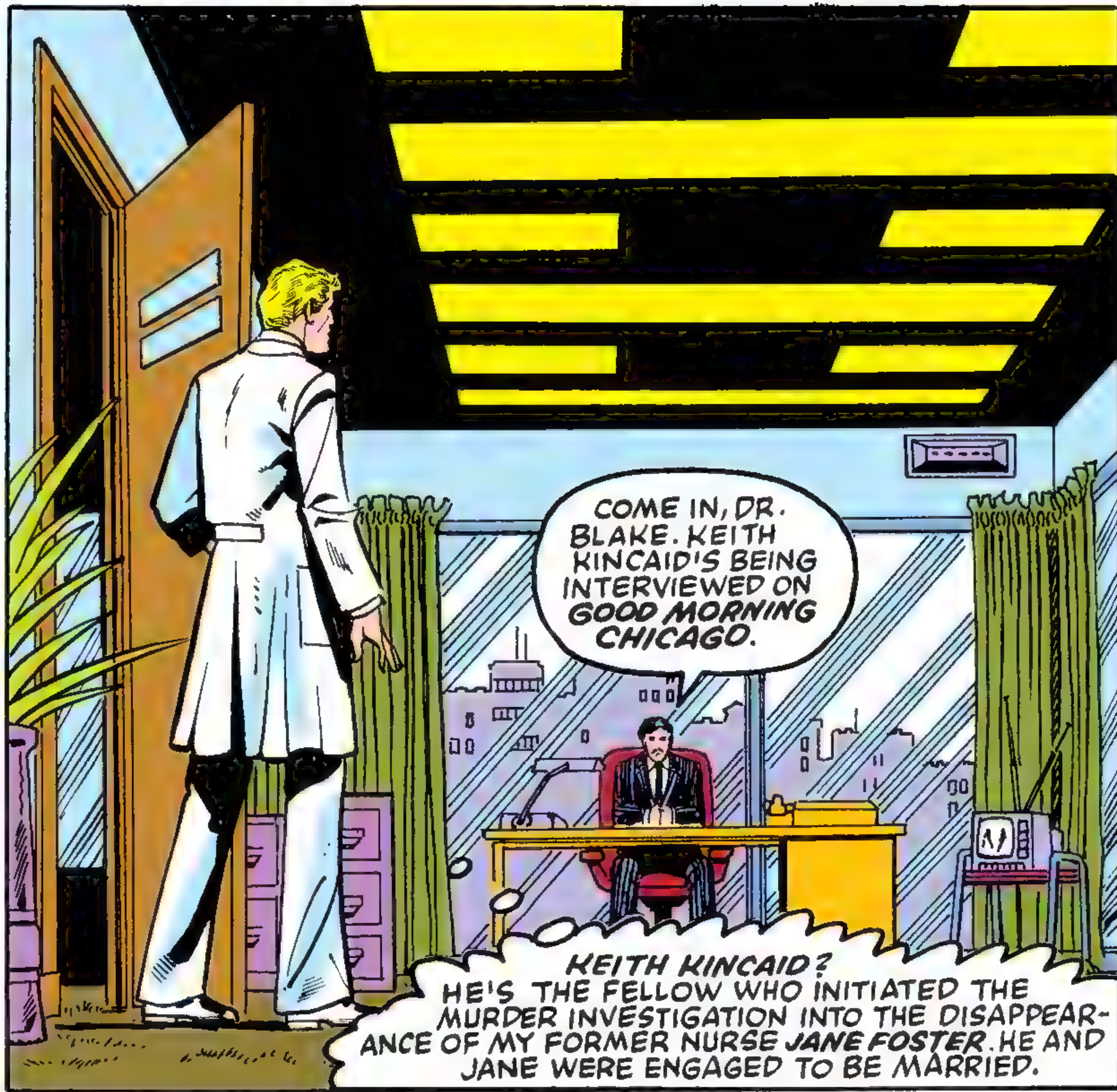






DOCTOR BLAKE
WANTED IN
514.

514?
THAT'S
ADMINISTRATION.
WHAT DO THEY
WANT FIRST
THING IN THE
MORNING?



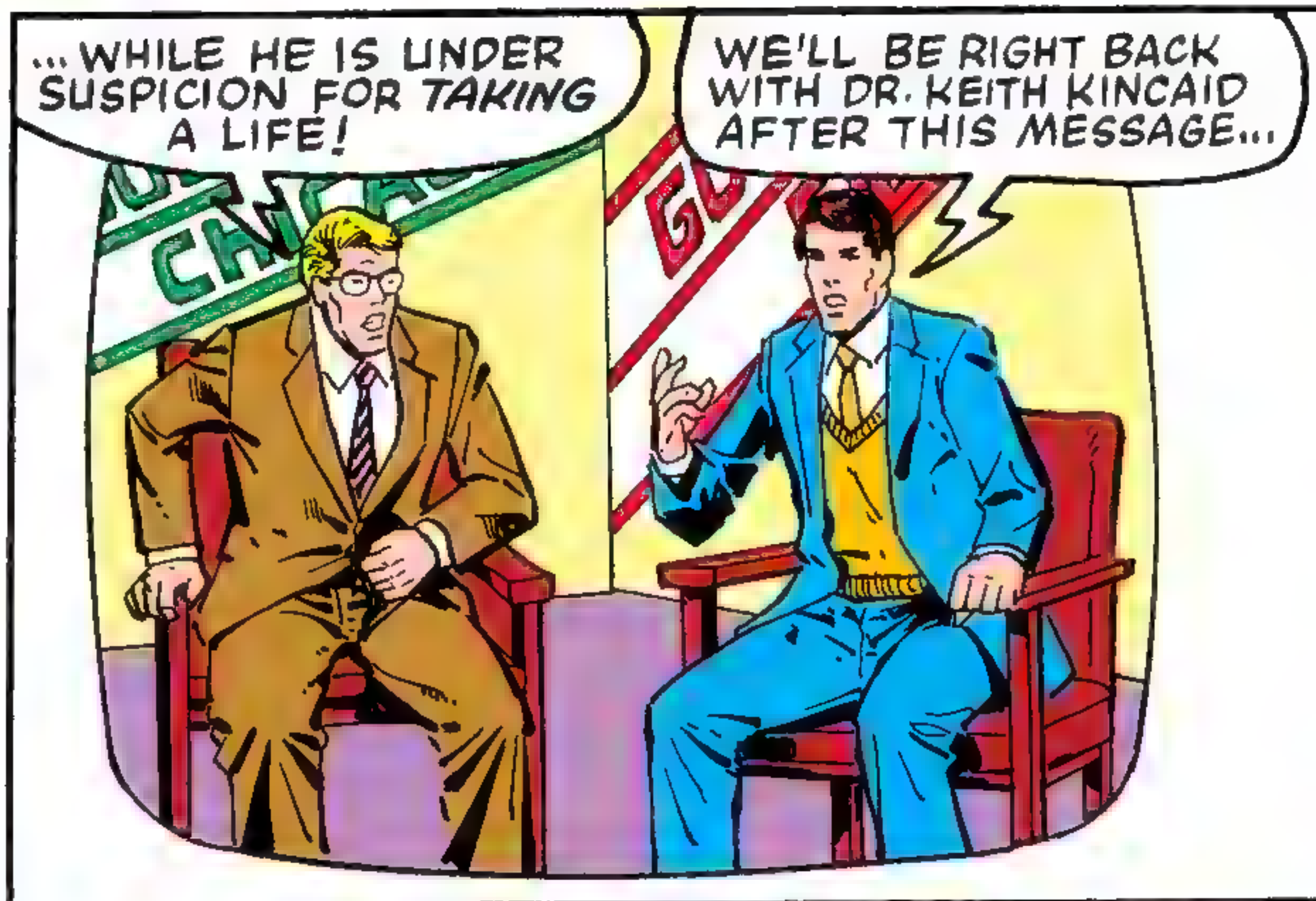
COME IN, DR.
BLAKE. KEITH
KINCAID'S BEING
INTERVIEWED ON
GOOD MORNING
CHICAGO.

KEITH KINCAID?
HE'S THE FELLOW WHO INITIATED THE
MURDER INVESTIGATION INTO THE DISAPPEAR-
ANCE OF MY FORMER NURSE JANE FOSTER. HE AND
JANE WERE ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.



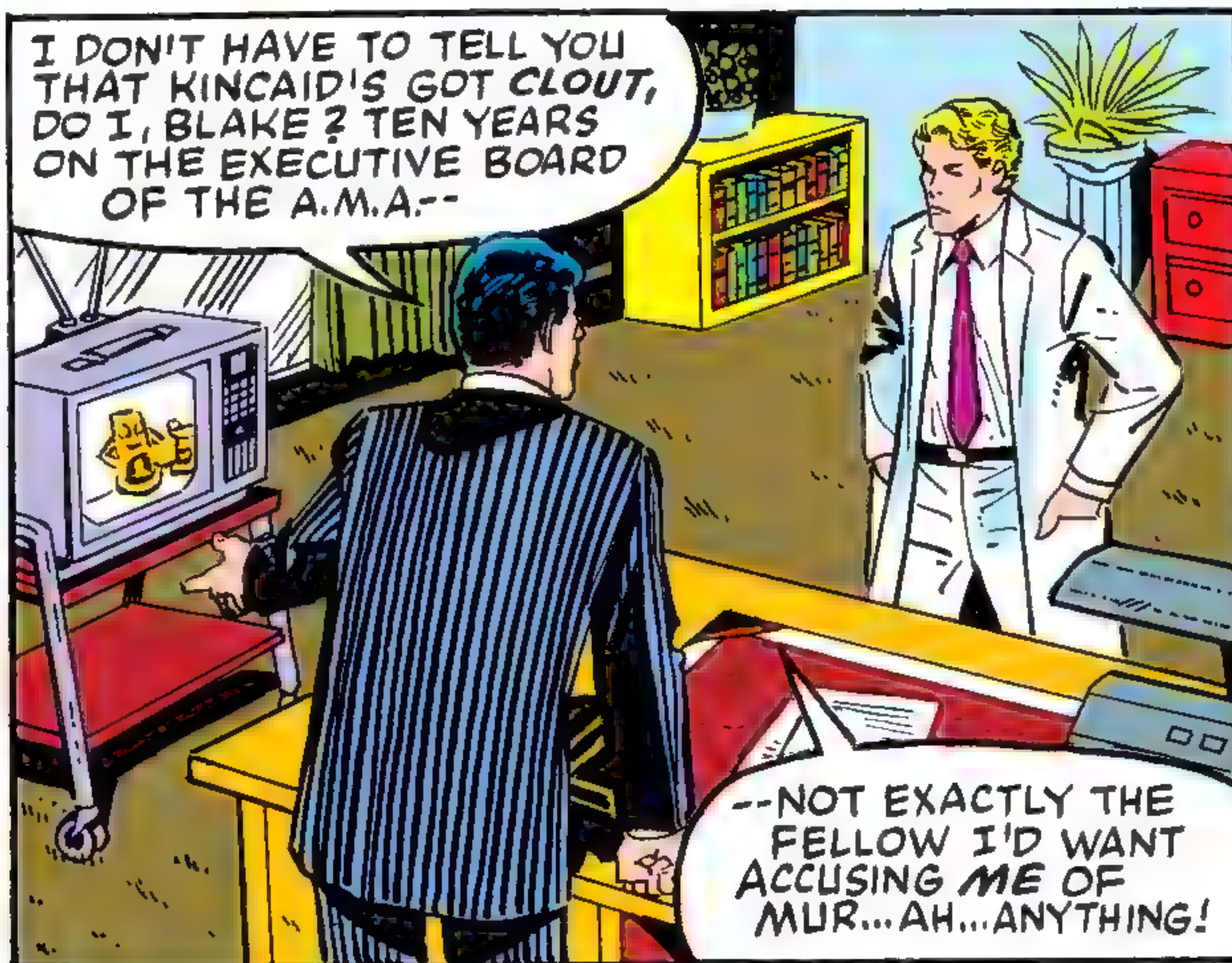
I THOUGHT
YOU'D BE
INTERESTED.

ABSOLUTELY, DAVID. IT
GOES AGAINST EVERY
GRAIN OF MEDICAL
ETHICS WHEN WE
PERMIT A PHYSICIAN--
A HEALER OF LIFE--
TO CONTINUE THE
PRACTICE OF
MEDICINE...



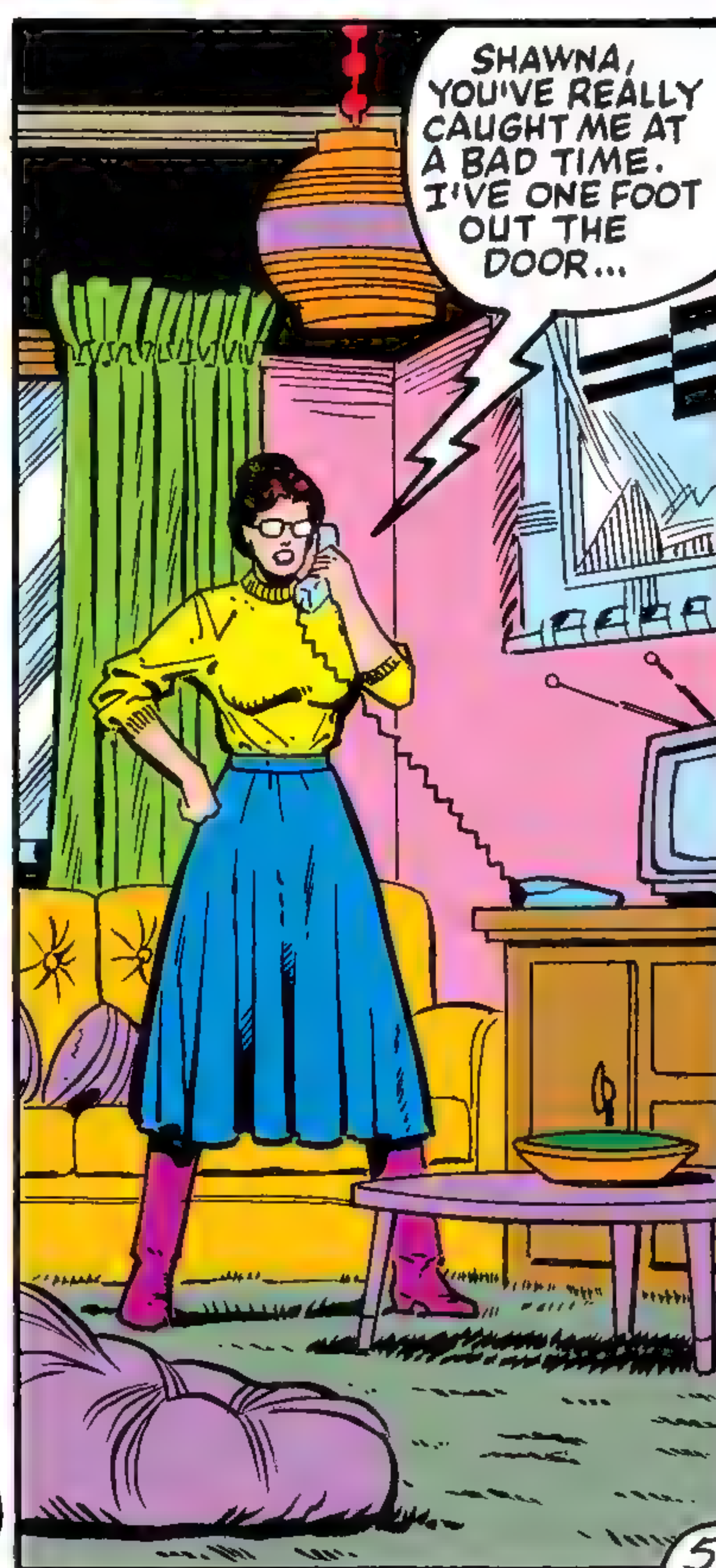
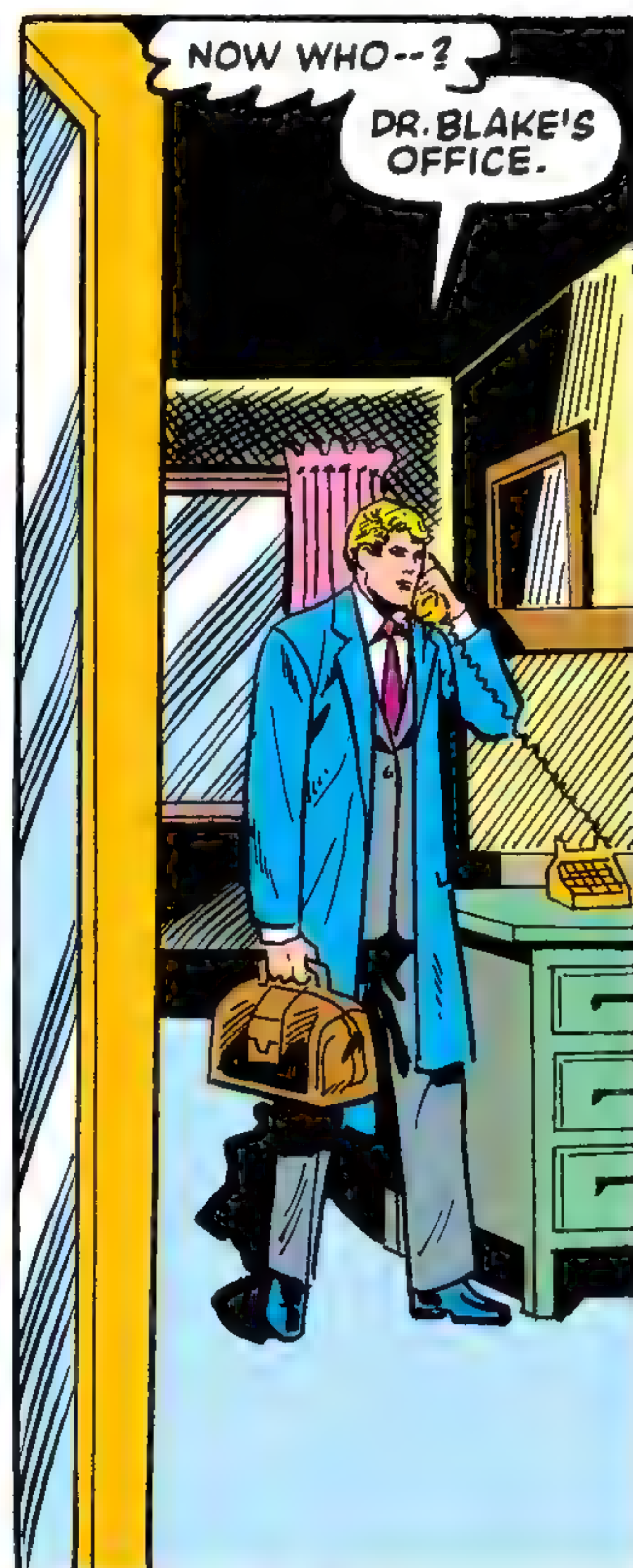
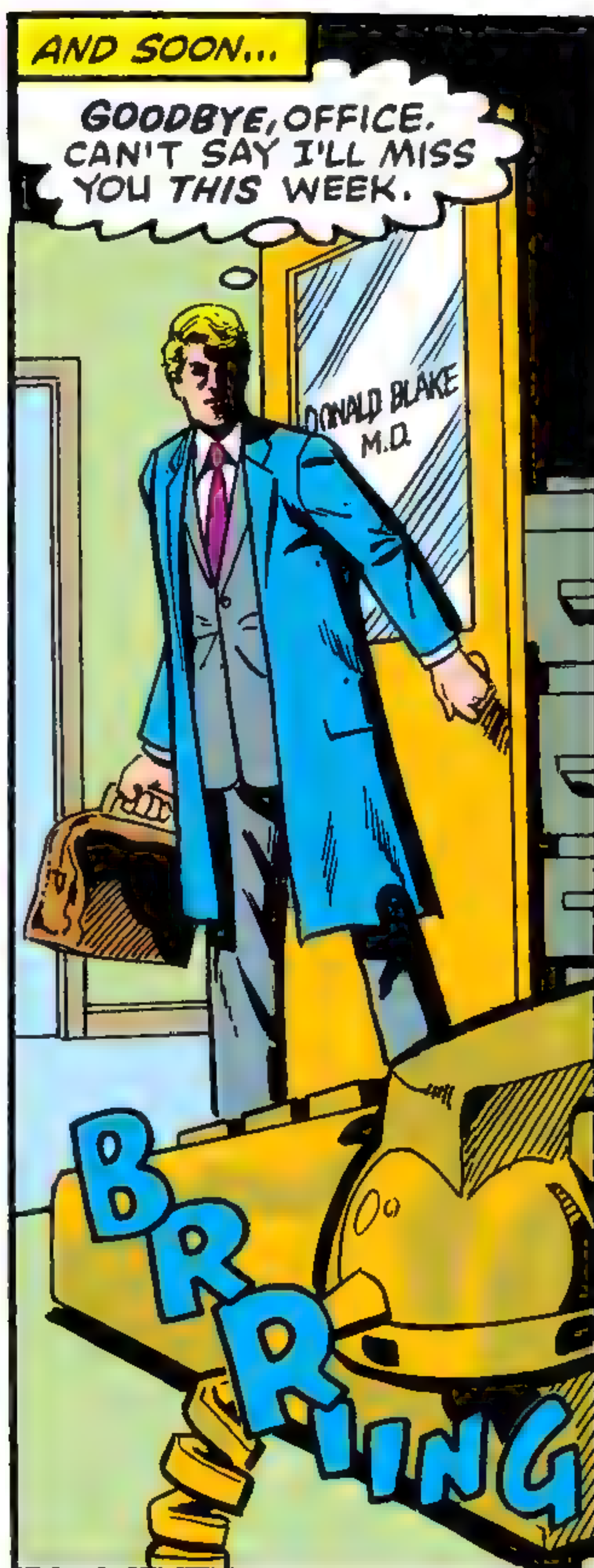
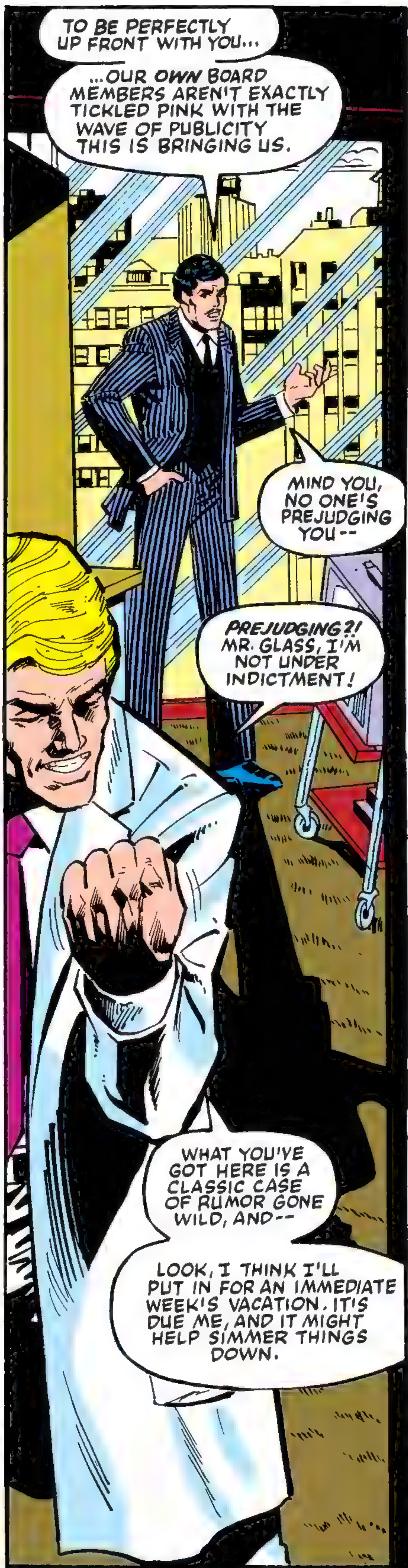
...WHILE HE IS UNDER
SUSPICION FOR TAKING
A LIFE!

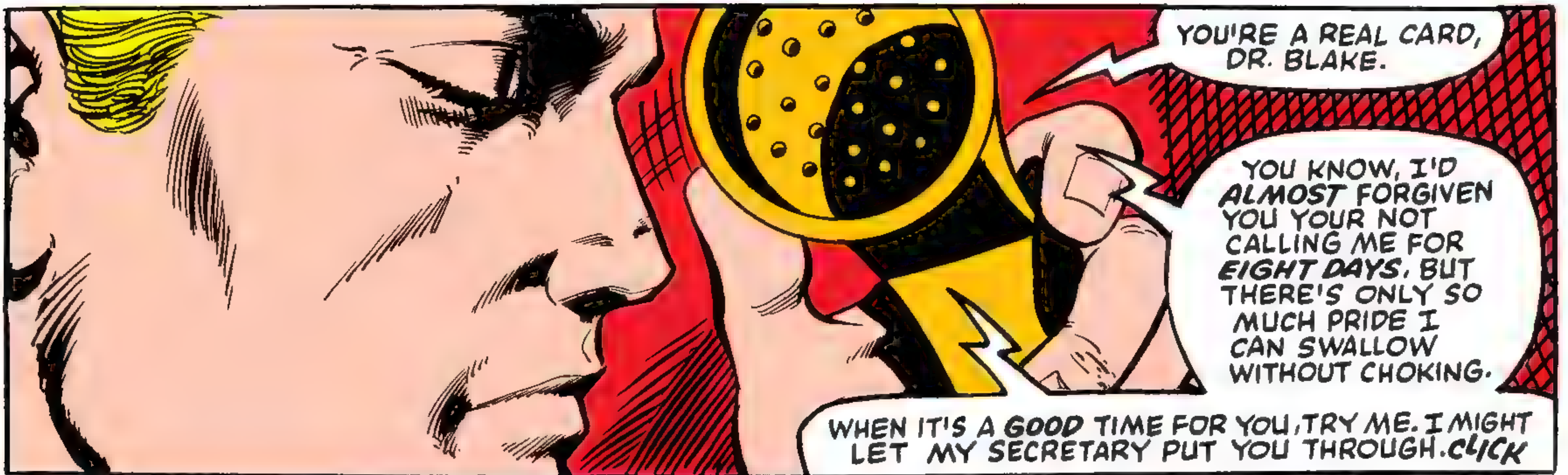
WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK
WITH DR. KEITH KINCAID
AFTER THIS MESSAGE...

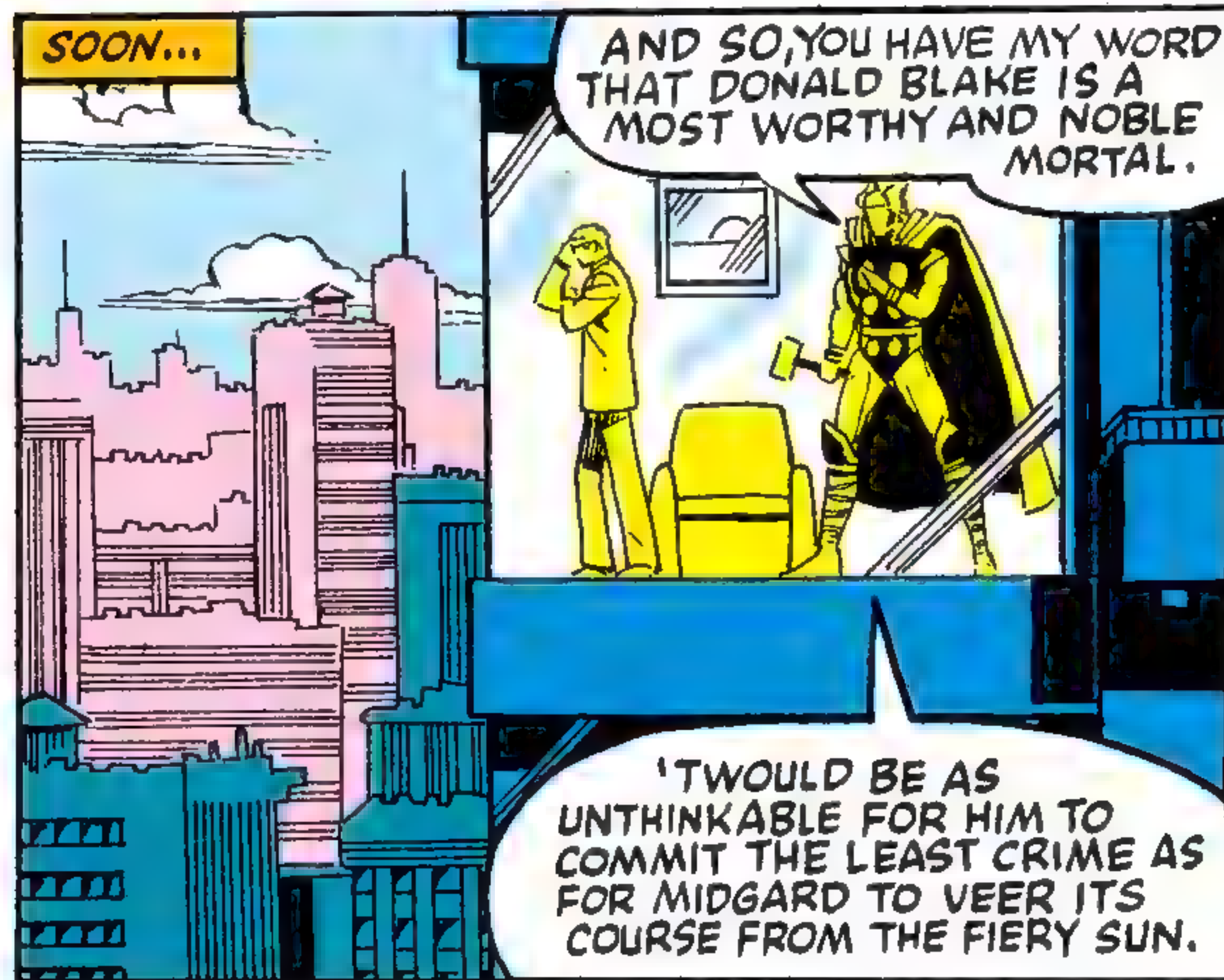
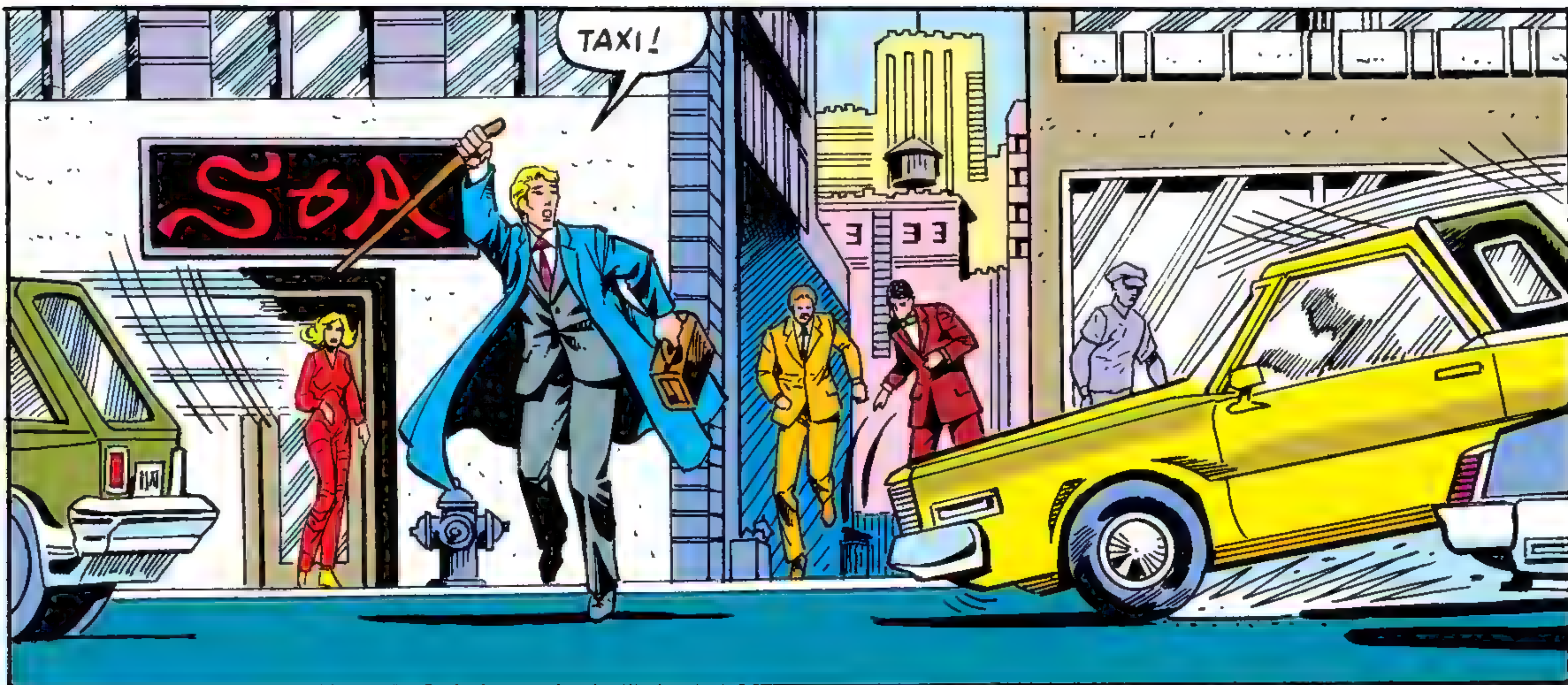


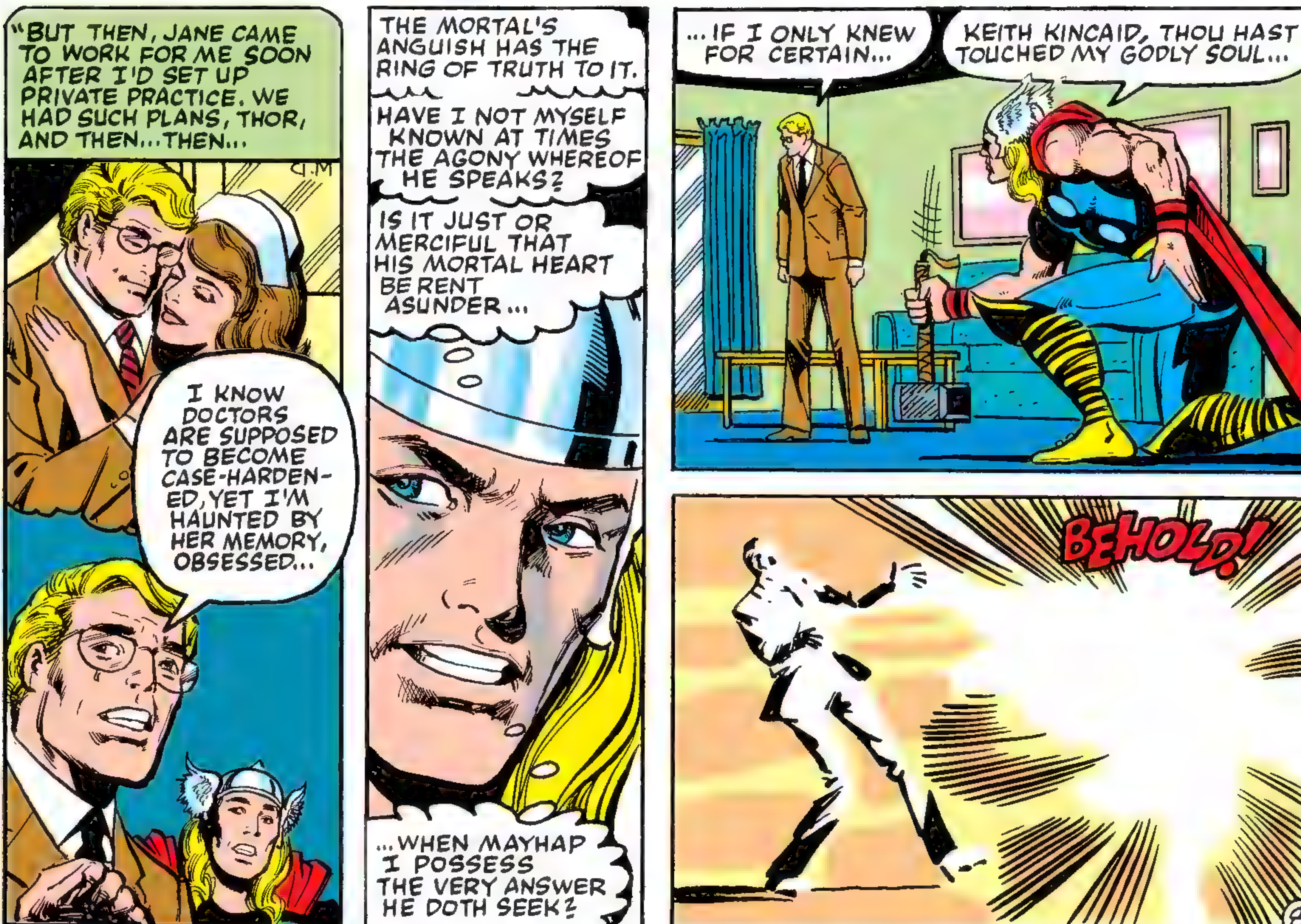
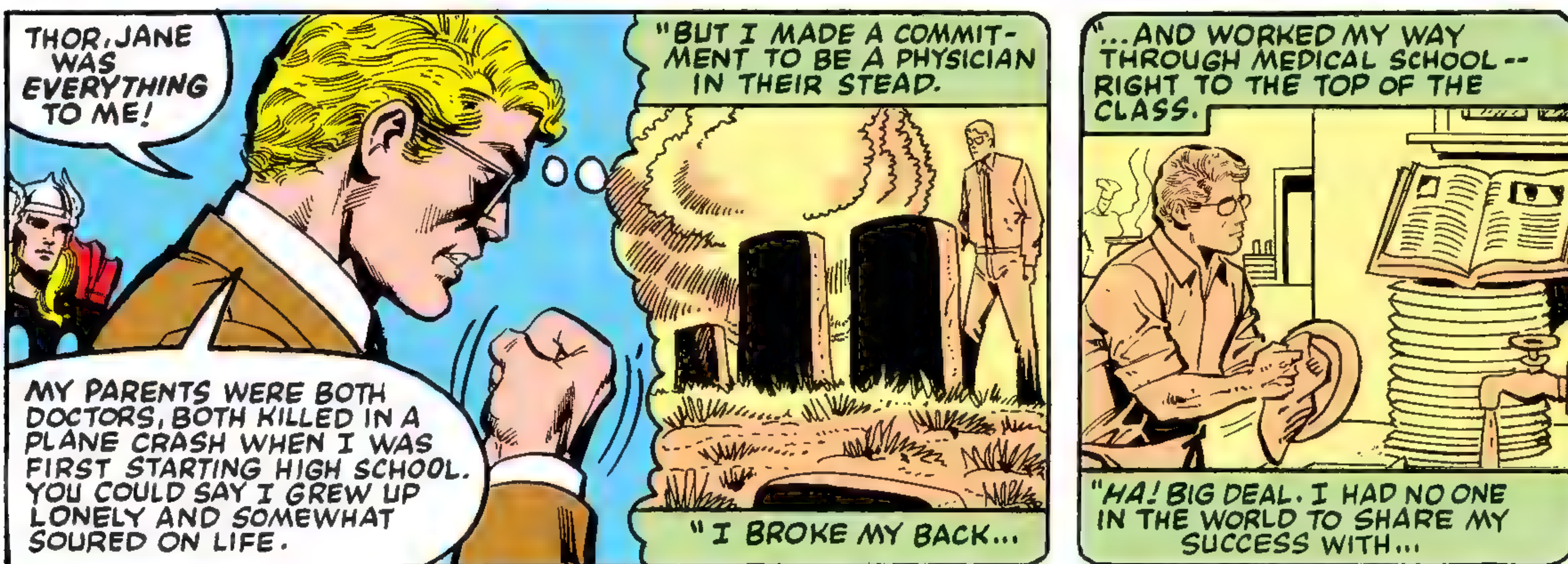
I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU
THAT KINCAID'S GOT CLOUT,
DO I, BLAKE? TEN YEARS
ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE A.M.A.--

--NOT EXACTLY THE
FELLOW I'D WANT
ACCUSING ME OF
MUR... AH... ANYTHING!









DONALD BLAKE?! WHAT KIND OF ILLUSION IS THIS?!

NO ILLUSION, DR. KINCAID. DON BLAKE IS THOR.

I'M TRUSTING YOU WITH MY MOST PRECIOUS SECRET IN THE HOPE THAT YOU'LL TRUST ME AND WHAT I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU.

INDEED, JANE AND I WERE ONCE IN LOVE, SO MUCH SO THAT I REVEALED TO HER MY IDENTITY, JUST AS I DID TO YOU.

WHEN JANE WAS HOSPITALIZED, THE GODDESS SIF OF ASGARD CAME TO EARTH AND GAVE UP HER LIFE ESSENCE TO SAVE JANE, BY MEANS OF THE RUNESTAFF.

SIF'S BODY SOMEHOW DISAPPEARED INTO JANE'S. UPON HER TRAVEL TO MYTHIC ASGARD, HOWEVER, JANE'S FORM SURRENDERED TO SIF'S. JANE HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE--

--NOT EVEN WHEN SIF JOURN-EYED BACK TO EARTH.

HOWEVER, I BELIEVE I HAVE LEARNED WHERE JANE MAY BE--

THOR, I'M PLEADING WITH YOU--

IF JANE'S STILL ALIVE, TAKE ME TO HER.

'TIS NO SIMPLE MATTER. WE MUST TRAVEL TO A DISTANT, DANGEROUS PLANET FOR THAT RUNESTAFF.

I KNOW NOT IF A MORTAL--

AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF LONELINESS AND ANXIETY, I WON'T BE LEFT BEHIND!

VERY WELL, COME. I MUST FETCH SIF FIRST.

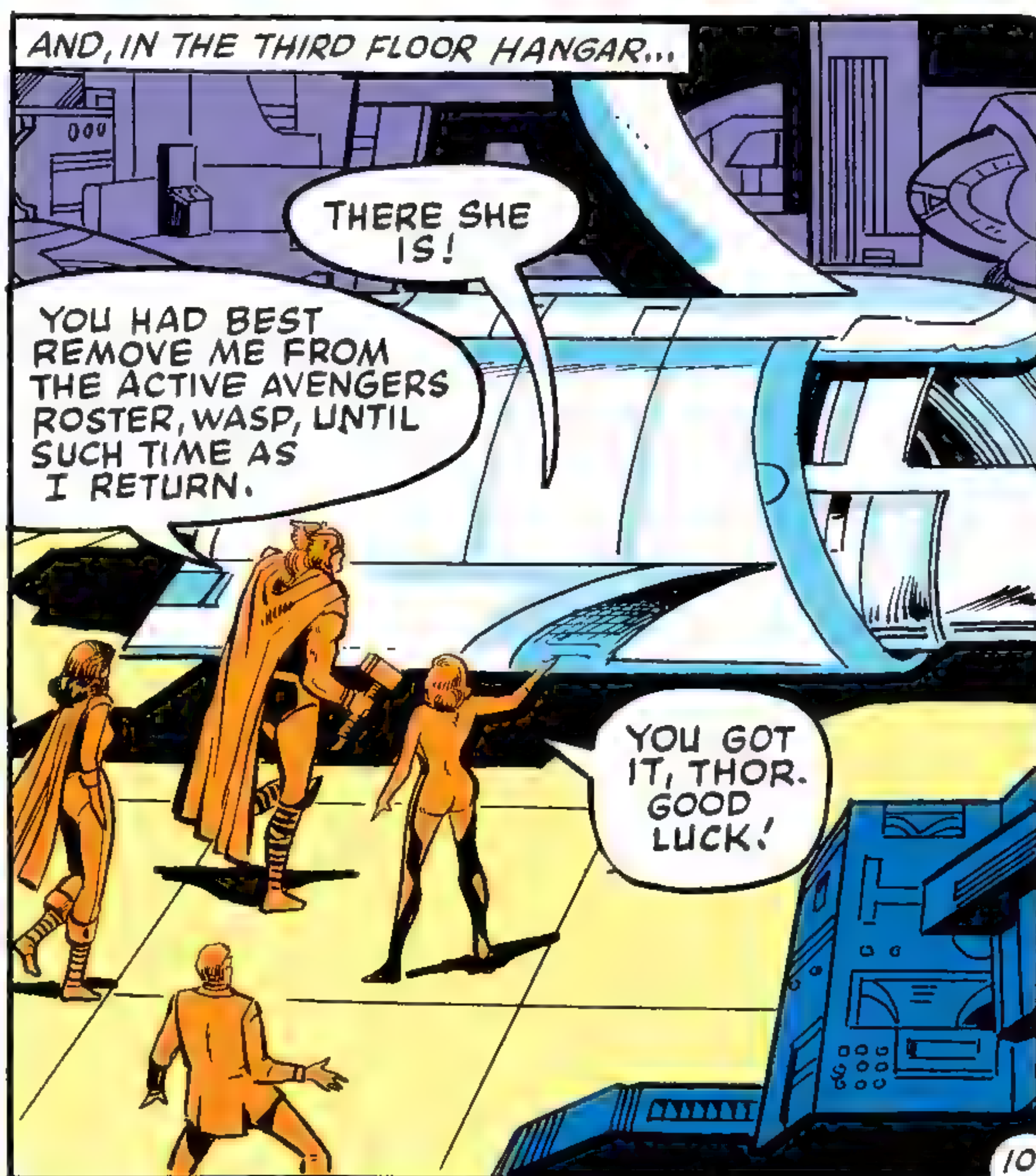
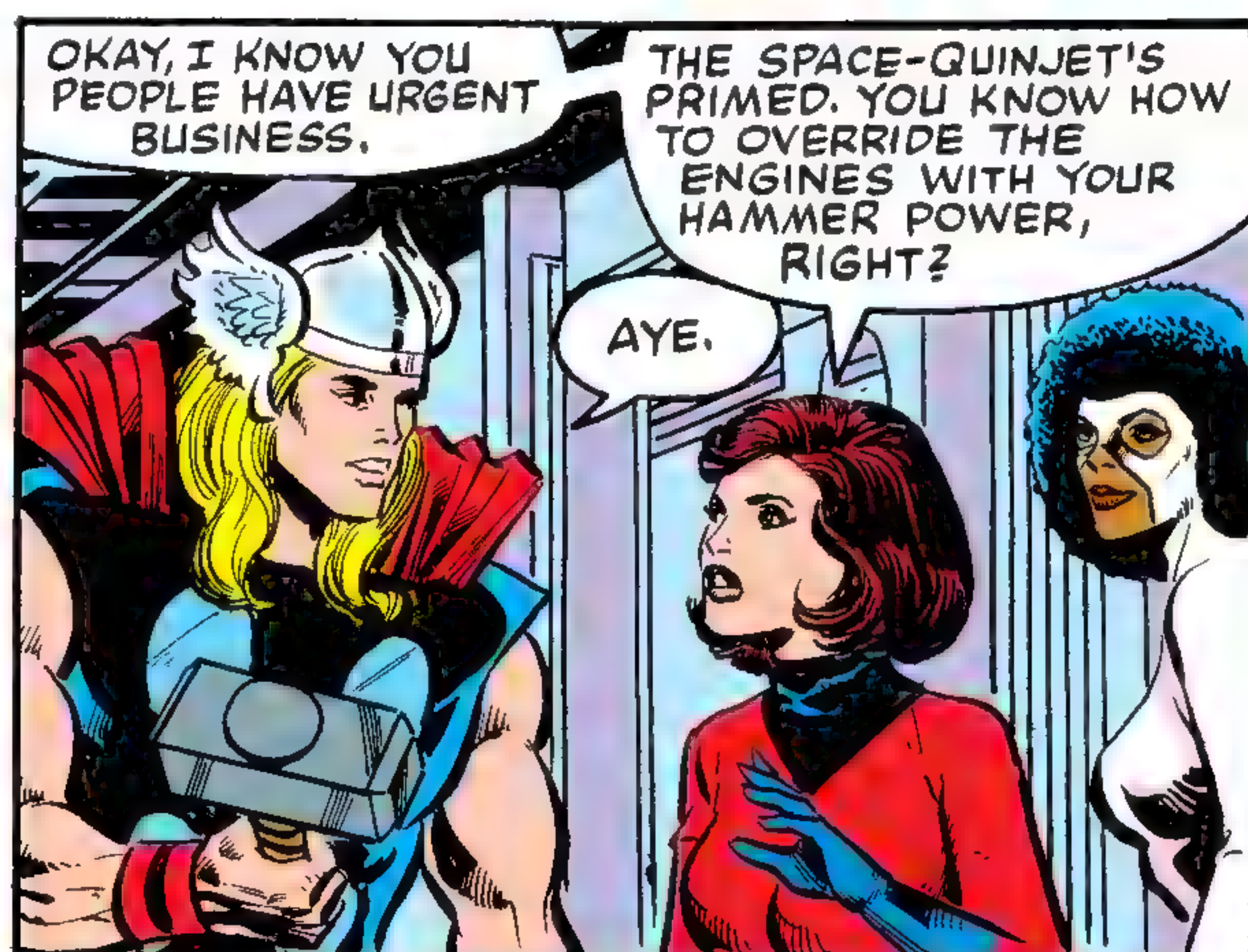
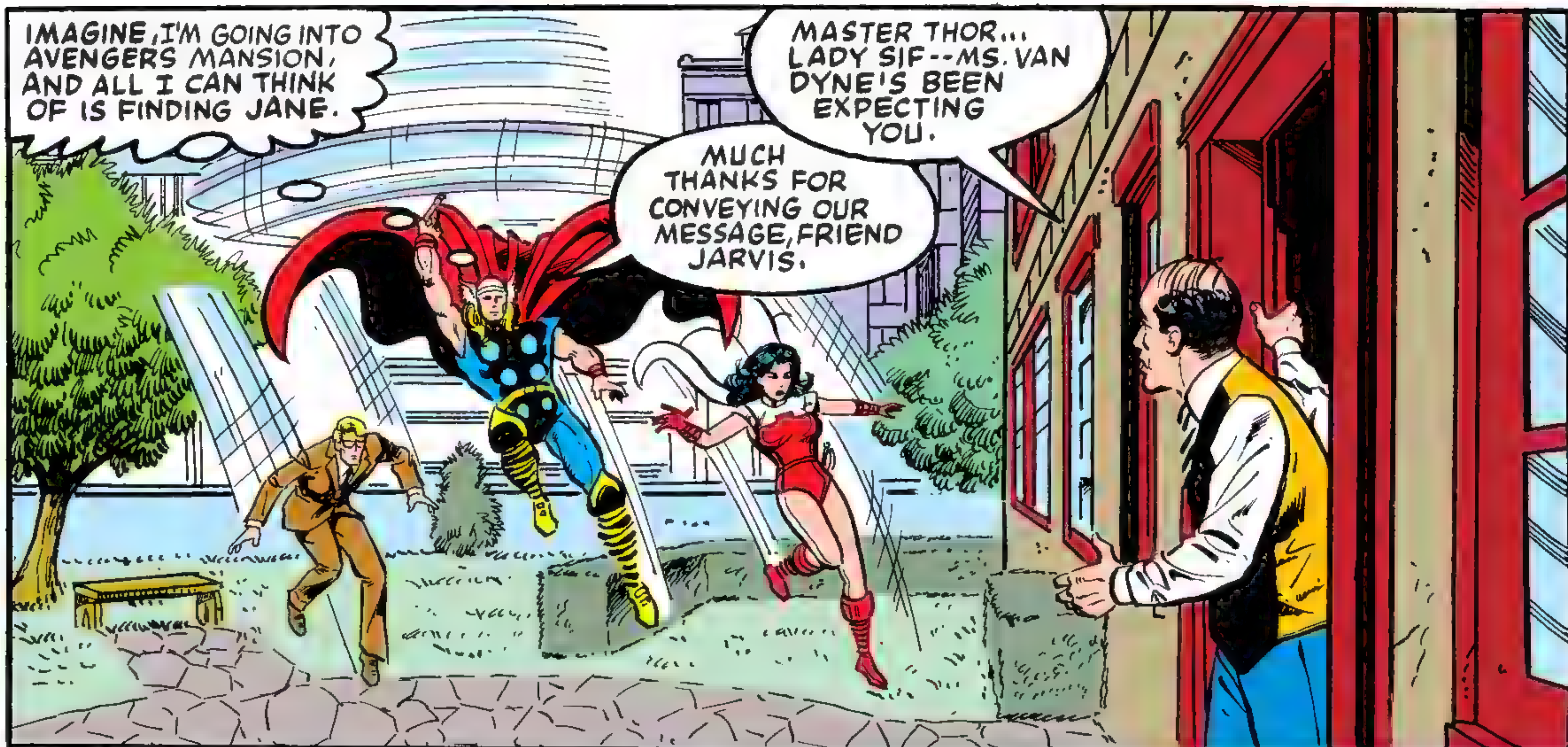
AND SOON...

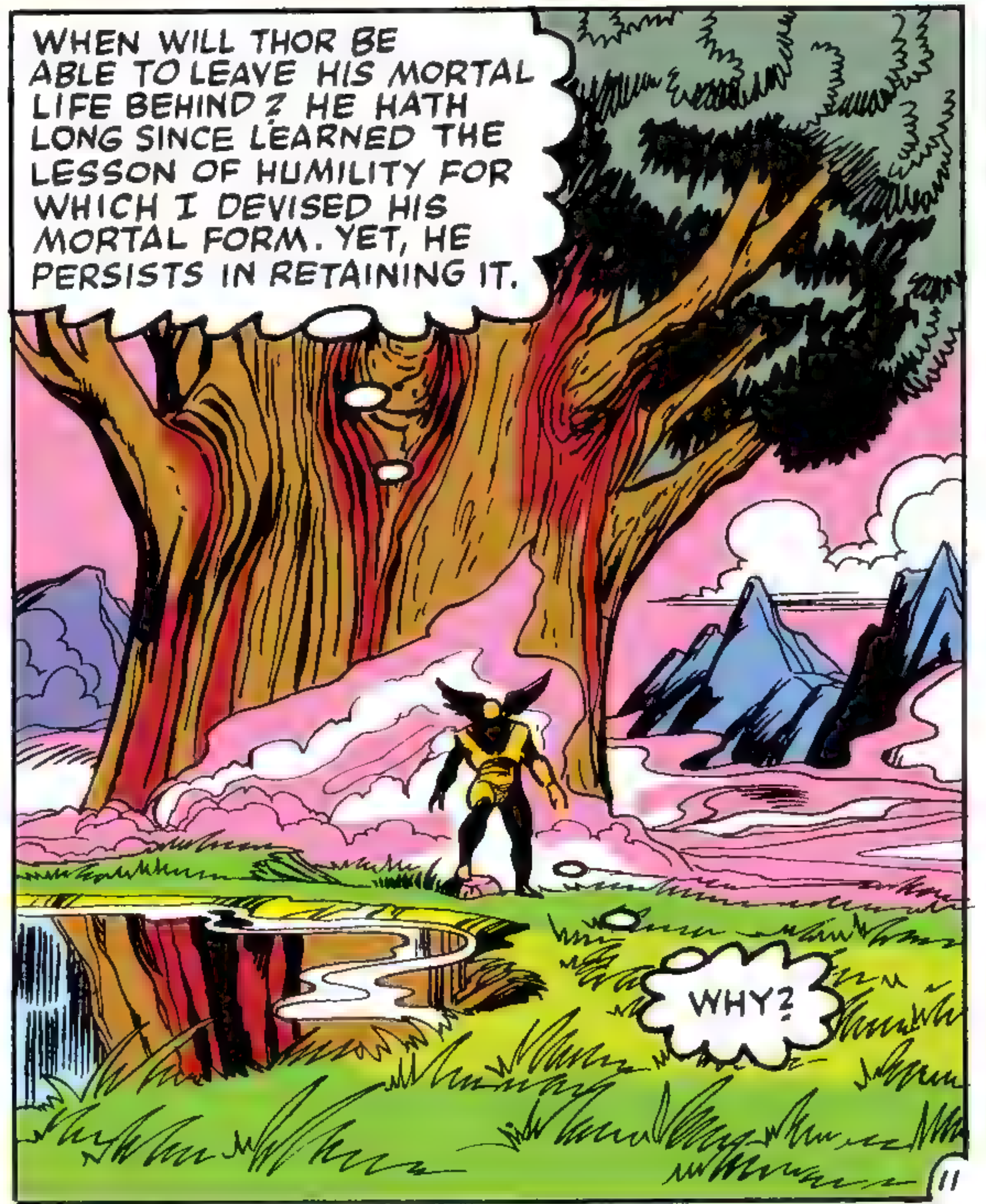
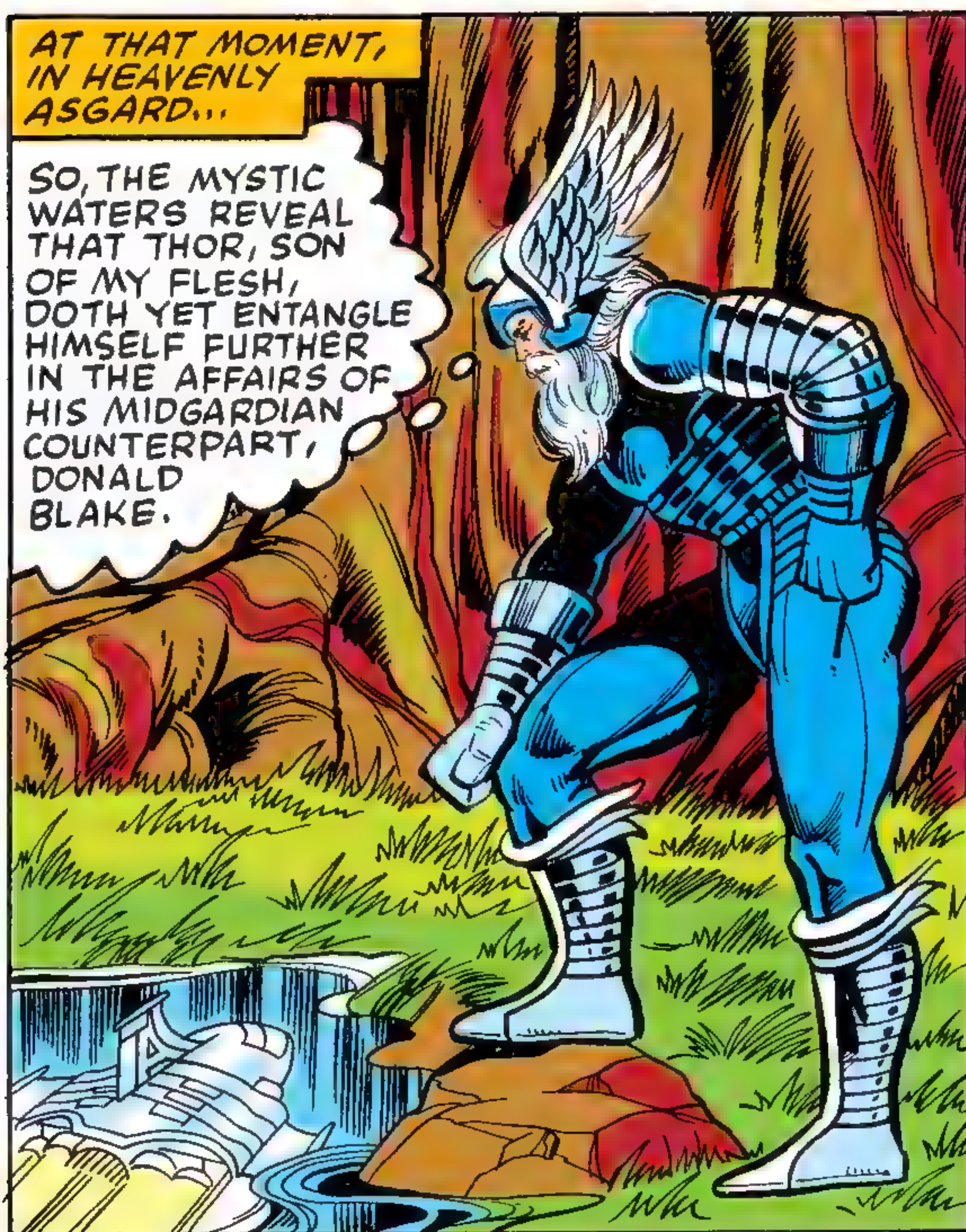
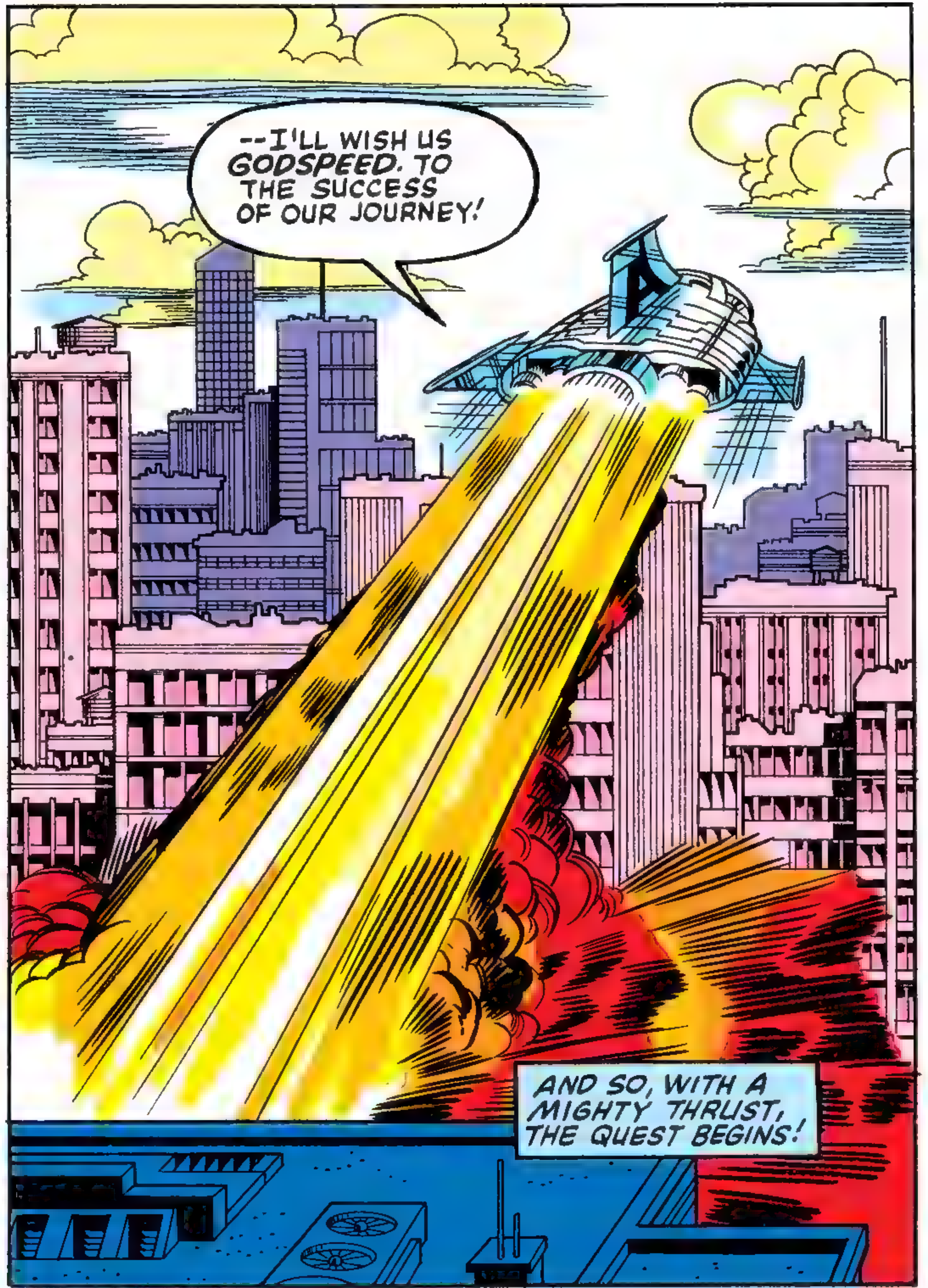
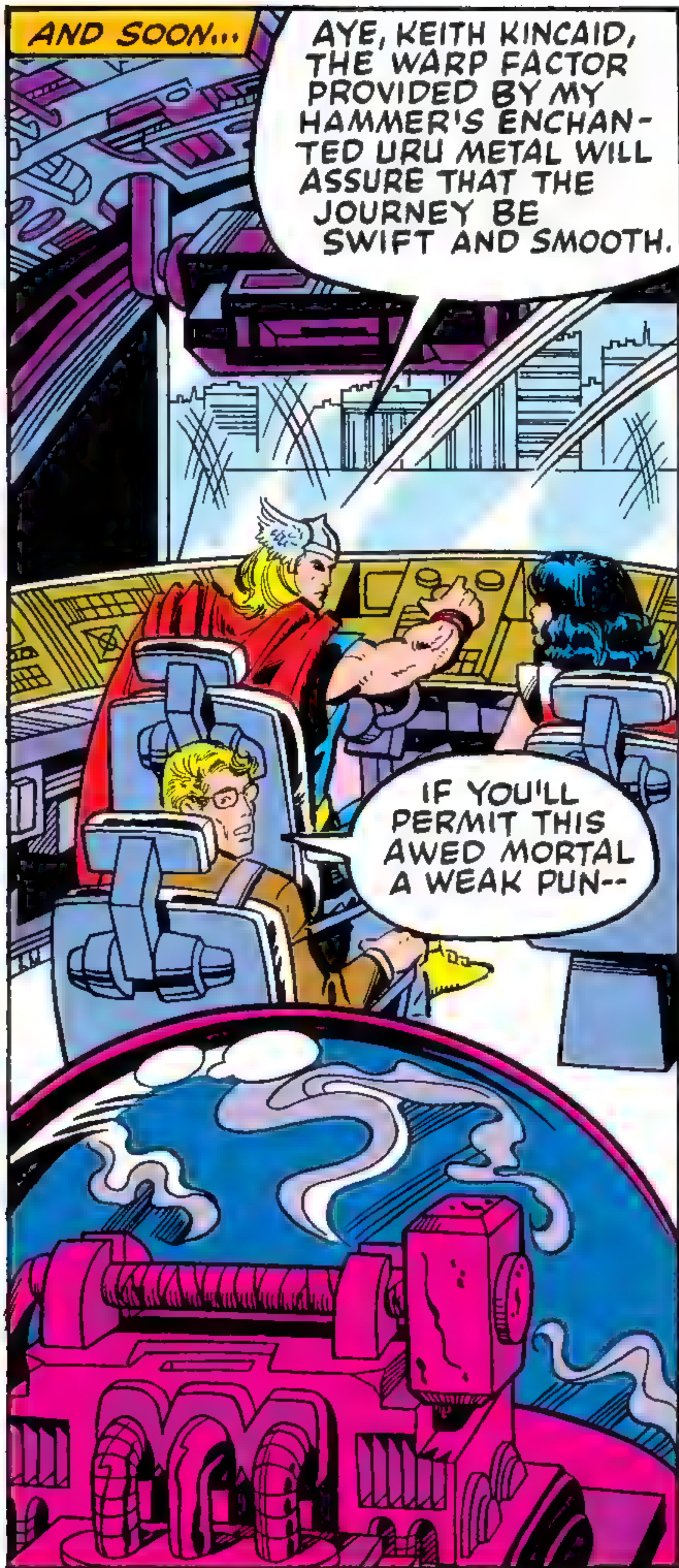
WE ARE RETURNED TO THE CITY OF NEW YORK, SWEET SIF. AVENGERS MANSION IS BELOW.

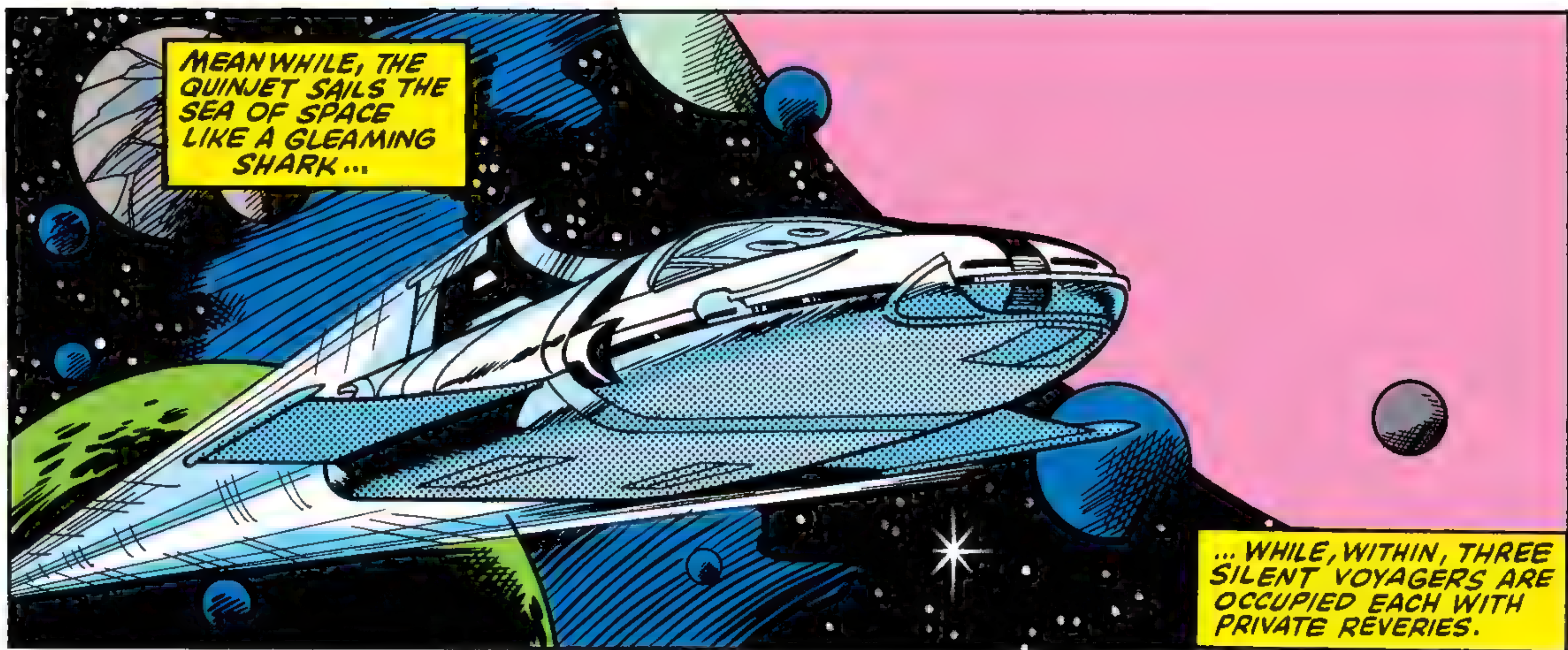
WITH THE AID OF MY COMRADES, WE SHALL SOON DEPART IN QUEST OF KAMO THARNN.

AT LAST WE DEPART MIDGARD'S CONFINES, MY PRINCE. MY SOUL THRILLS TO THE THOUGHT OF PRESENT DEEDS WORTHY OF A GODDESS!

I-I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! FLYING ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN A GODDESS'S HAND!

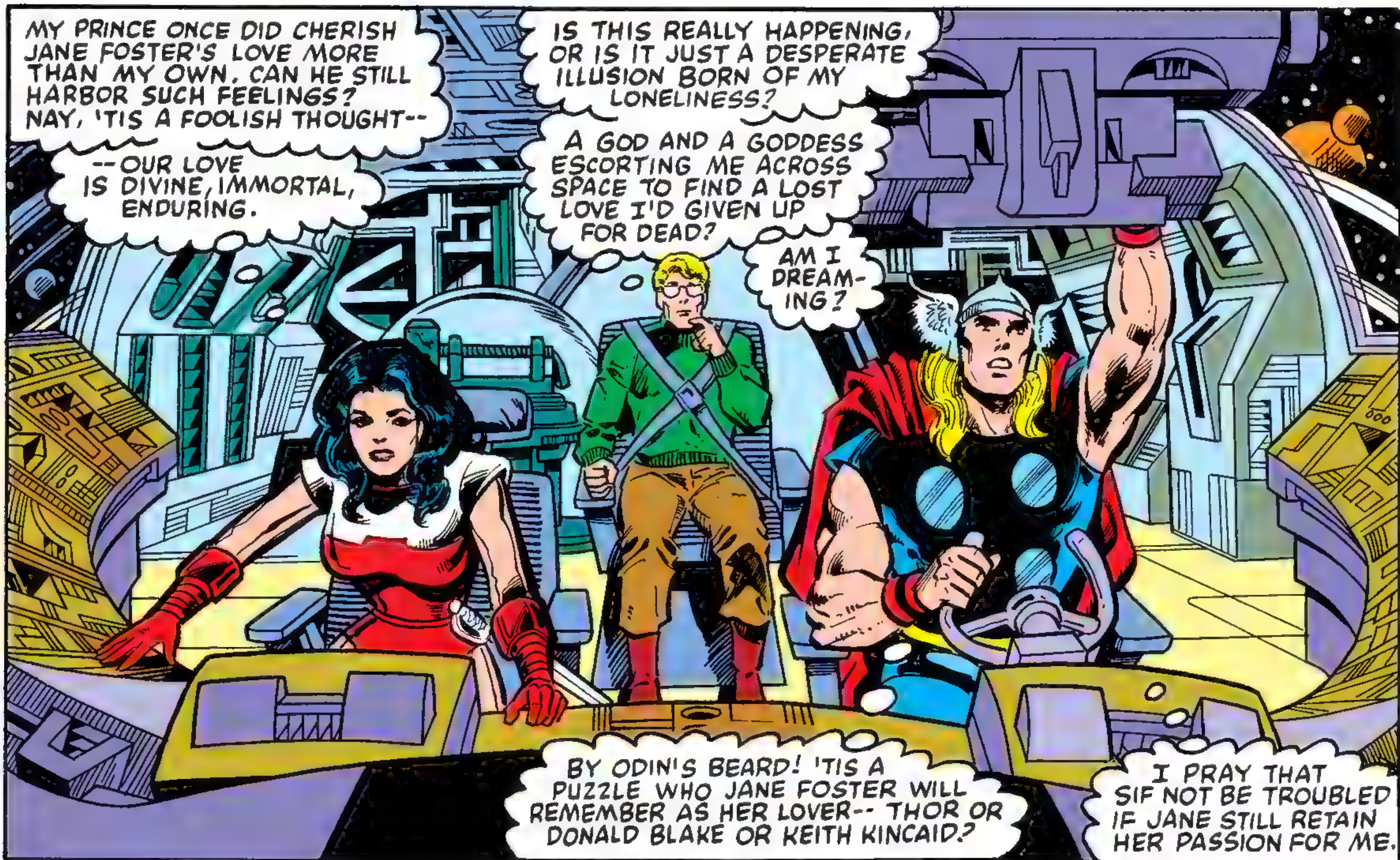






MEANWHILE, THE
QUINJET SAILS THE
SEA OF SPACE
LIKE A GLEAMING
SHARK...

... WHILE, WITHIN, THREE
SILENT VOYAGERS ARE
OCCUPIED EACH WITH
PRIVATE REVERIES.



MY PRINCE ONCE DID CHERISH
JANE FOSTER'S LOVE MORE
THAN MY OWN. CAN HE STILL
HARBOR SUCH FEELINGS?
NAY, 'TIS A FOOLISH THOUGHT--

-- OUR LOVE
IS DIVINE, IMMORTAL,
ENDURING.

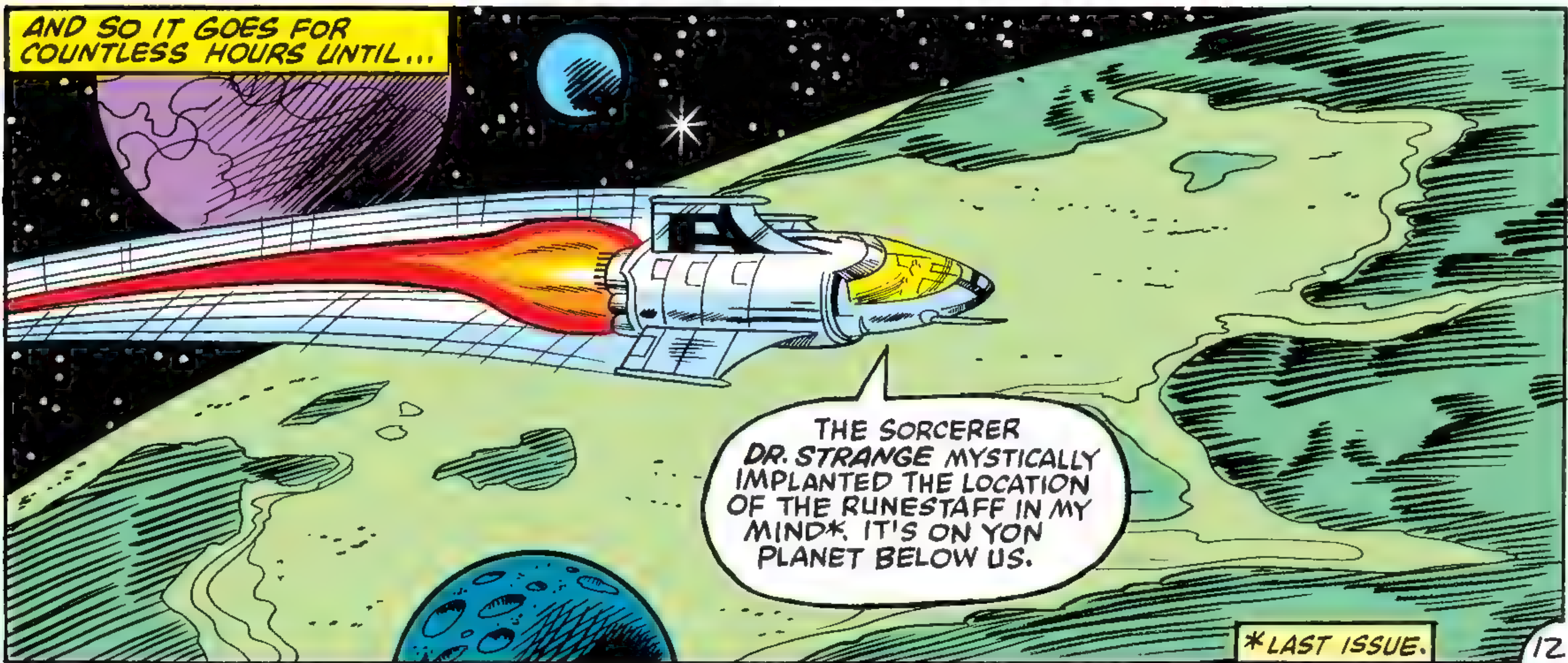
IS THIS REALLY HAPPENING,
OR IS IT JUST A DESPERATE
ILLUSION BORN OF MY
LONELINESS?

A GOD AND A GODDESS
ESCORTING ME ACROSS
SPACE TO FIND A LOST
LOVE I'D GIVEN UP
FOR DEAD?

AM I DREAM-
ING?

BY ODIN'S BEARD! 'TIS A
PUZZLE WHO JANE FOSTER WILL
REMEMBER AS HER LOVER-- THOR OR
DONALD BLAKE OR KEITH KINCAID?

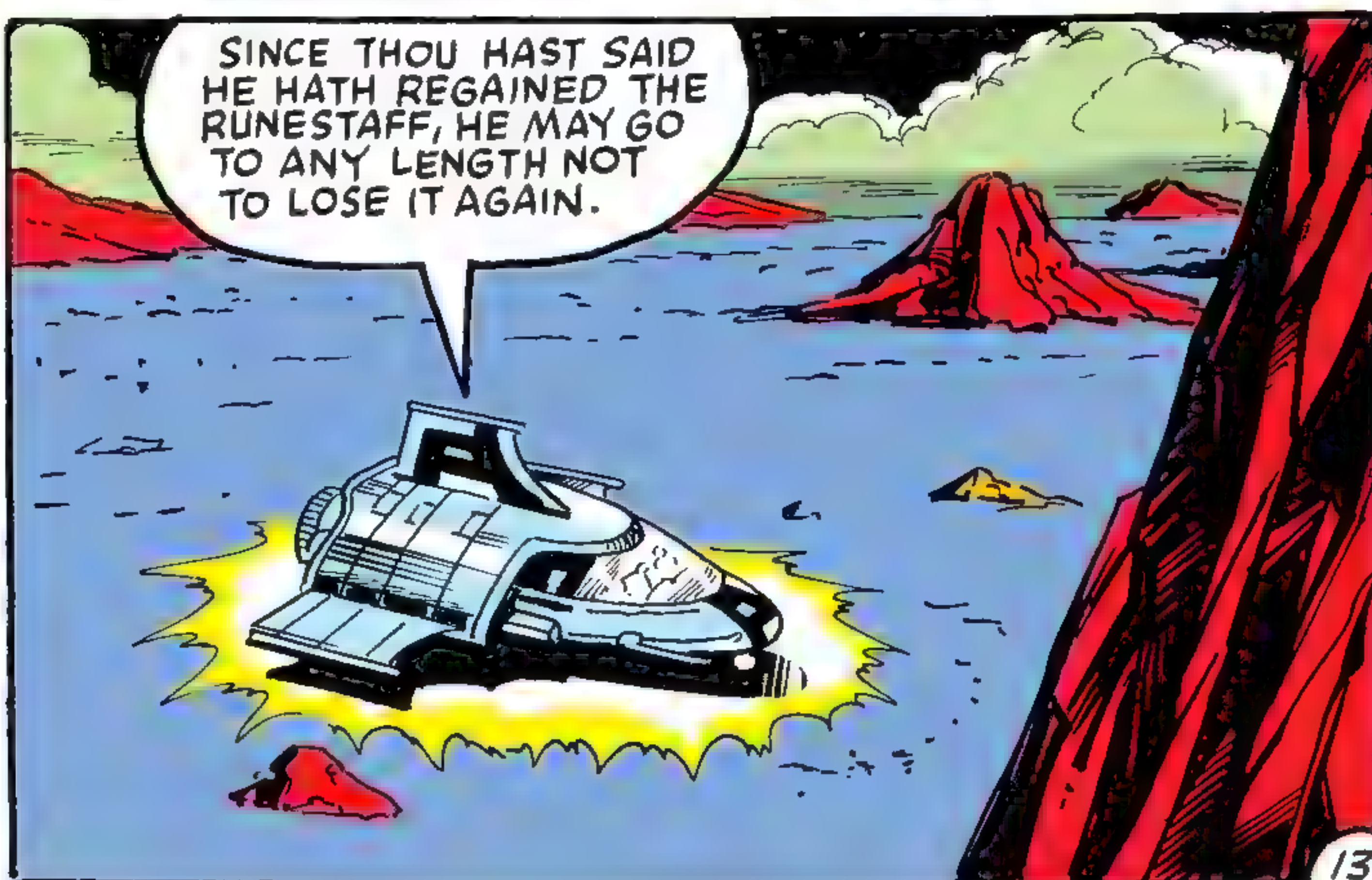
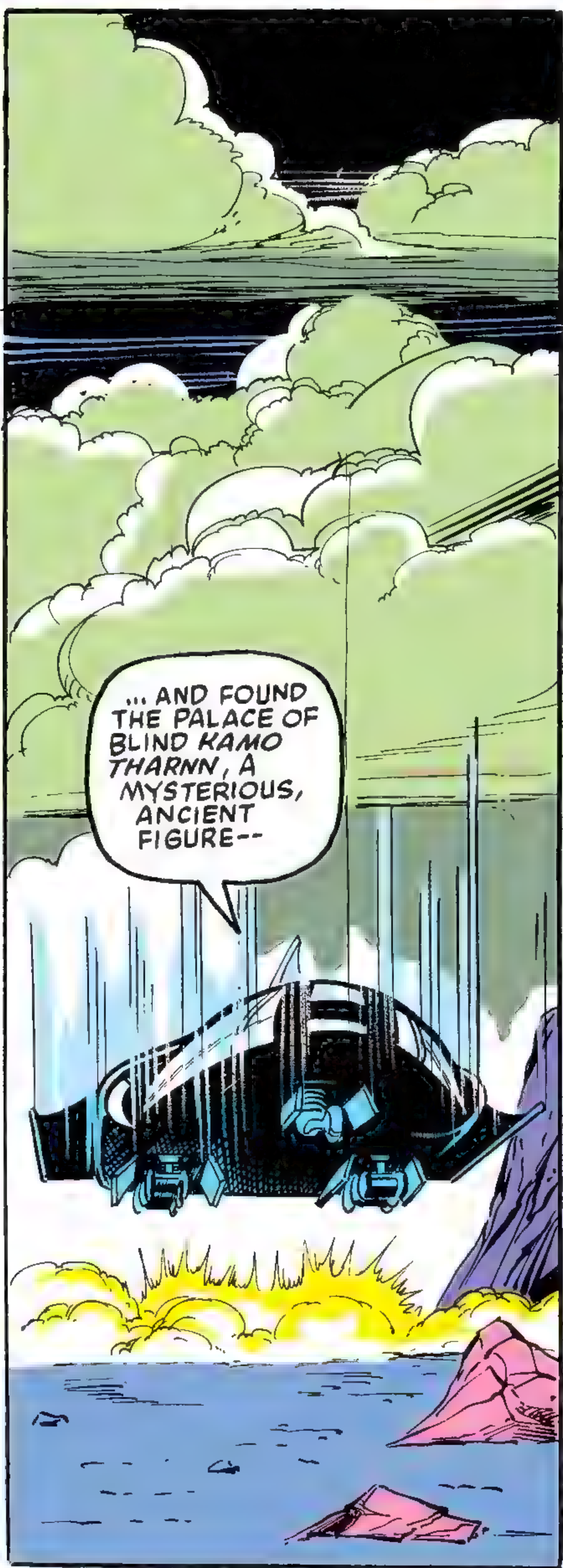
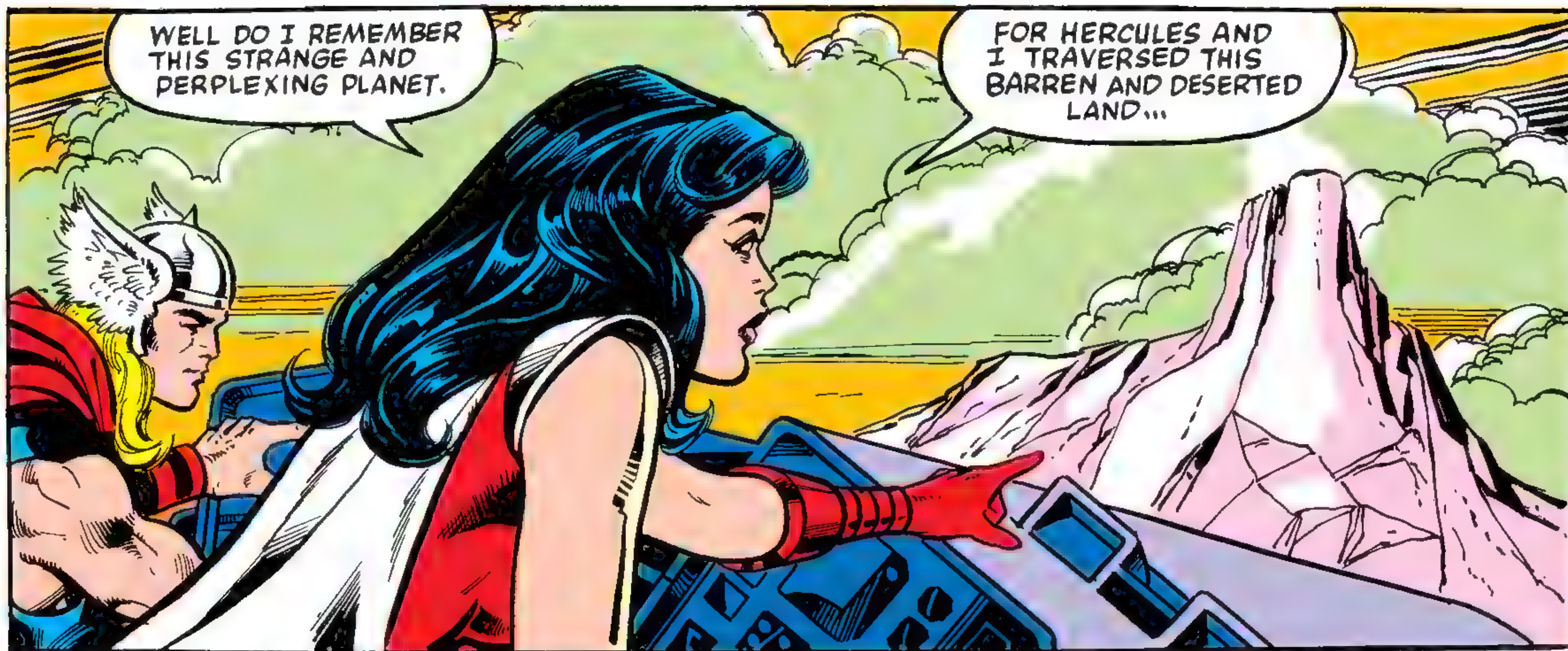
I PRAY THAT
SIF NOT BE TROUBLED
IF JANE STILL RETAIN
HER PASSION FOR ME.

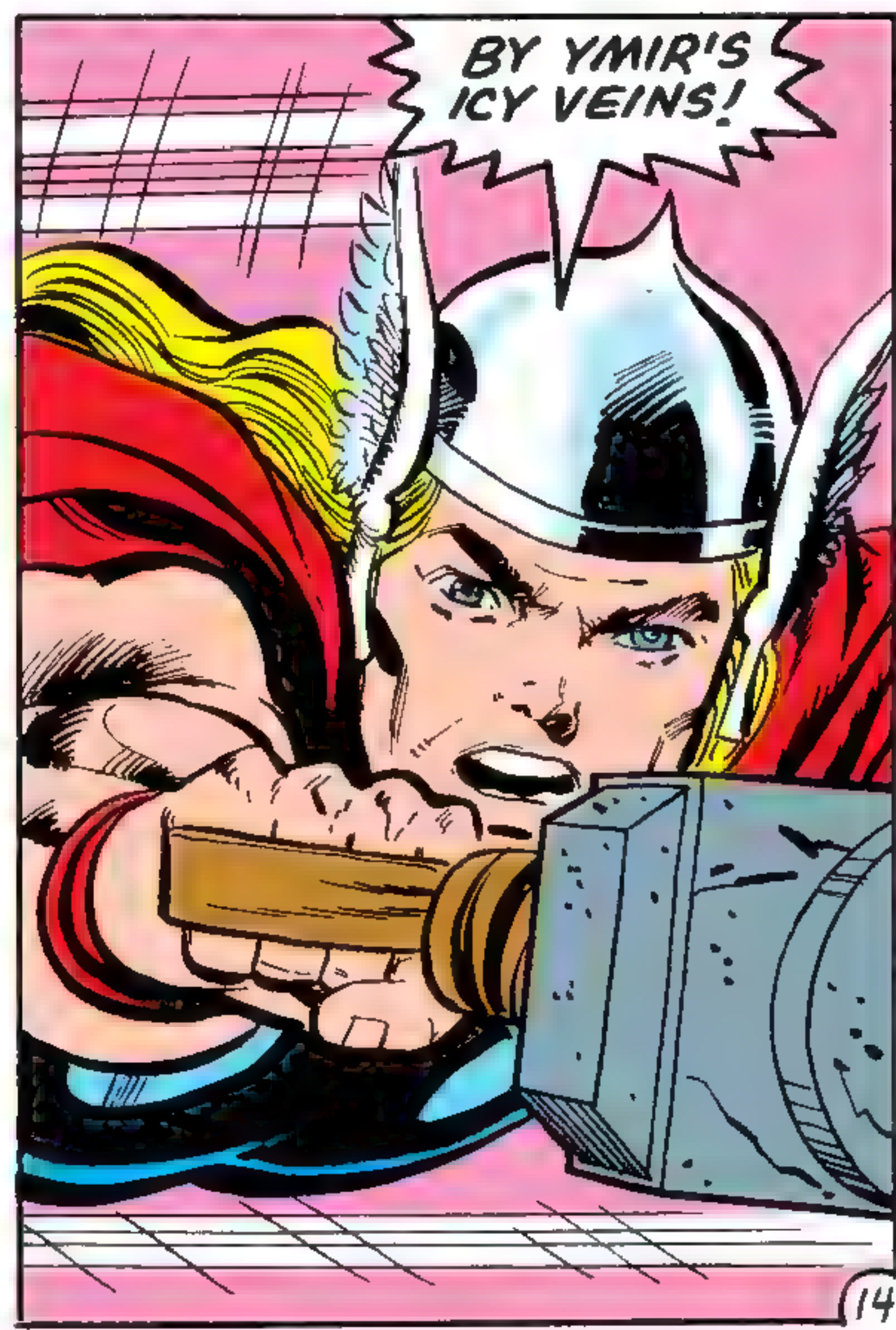
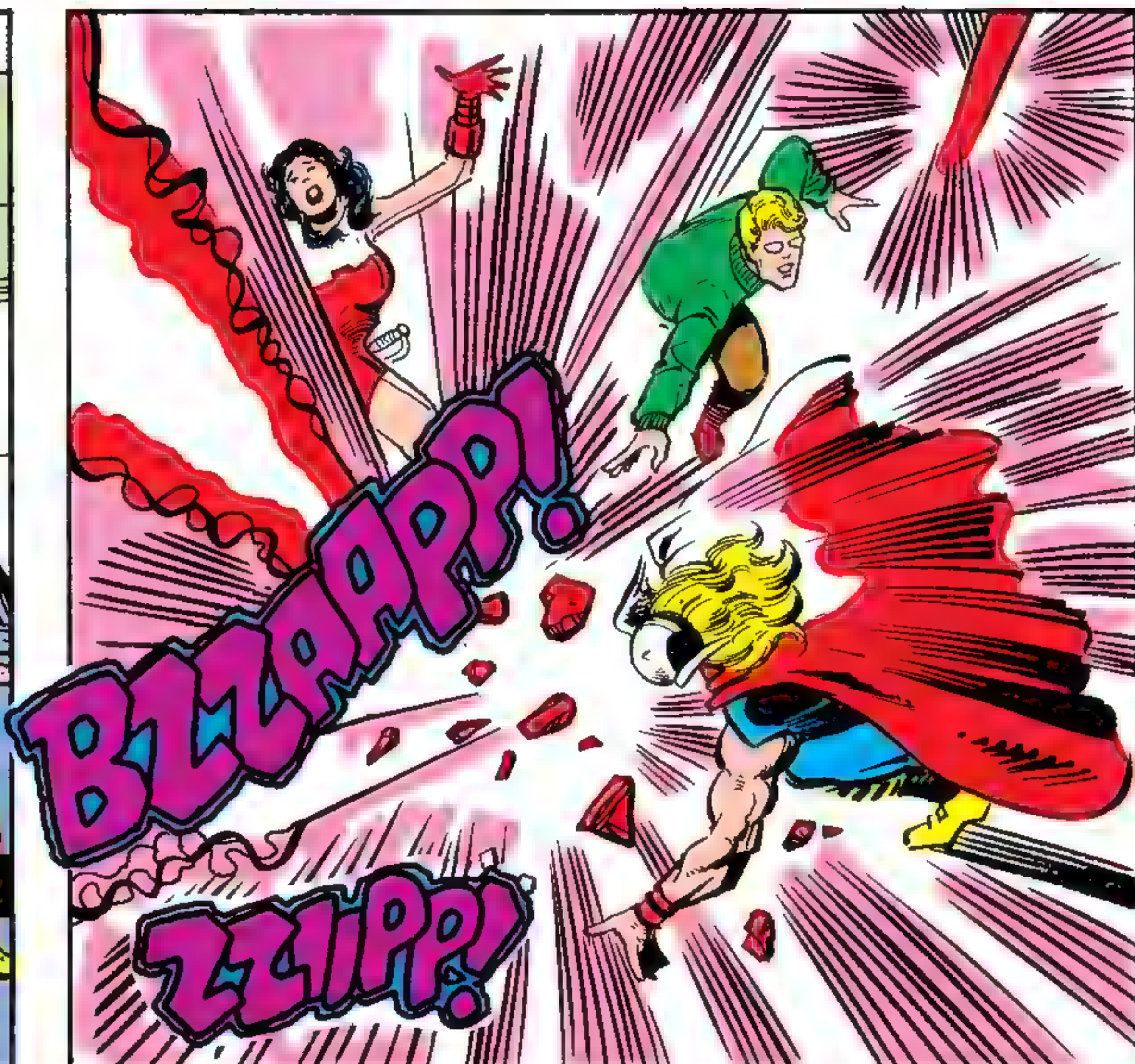
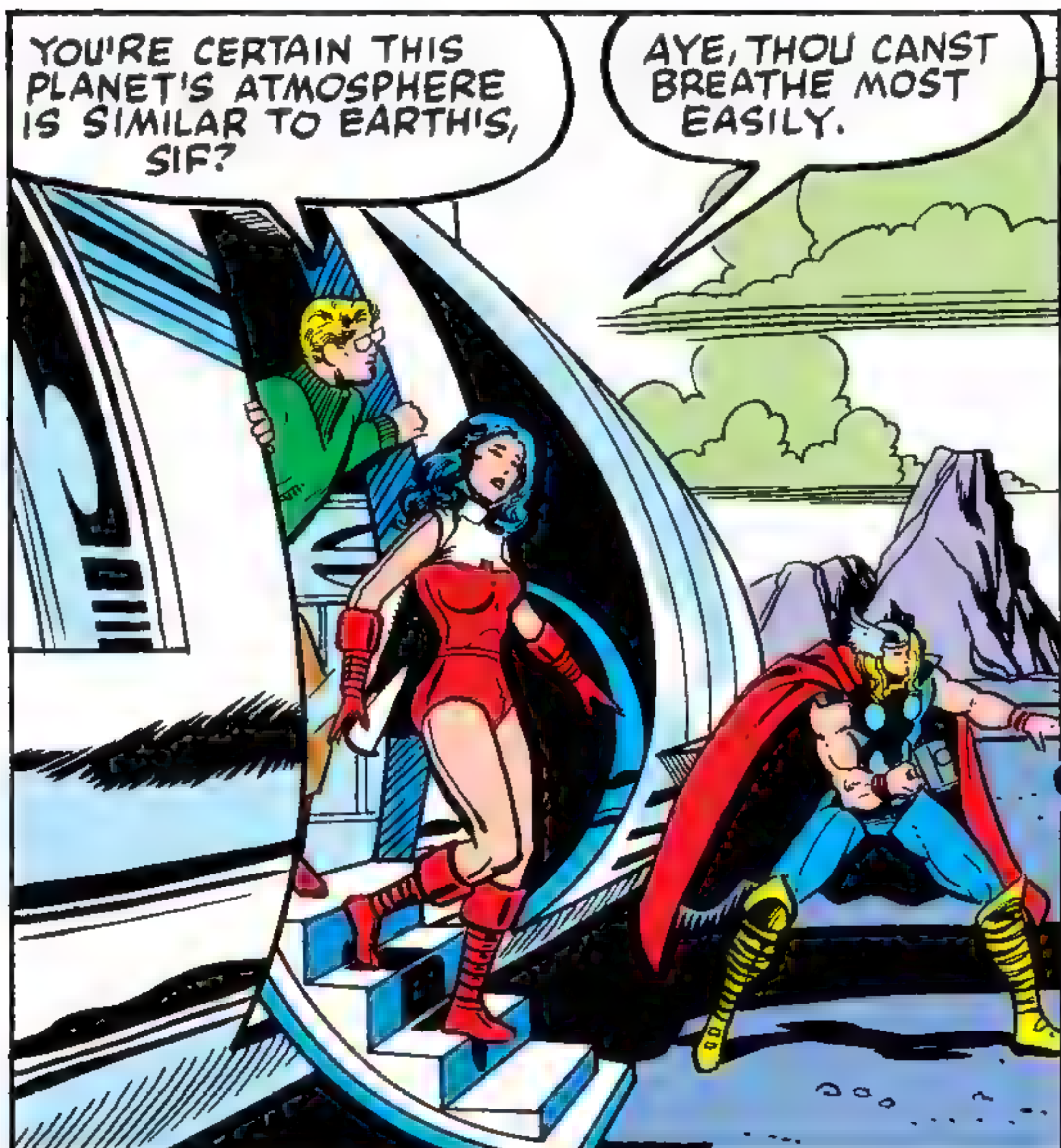


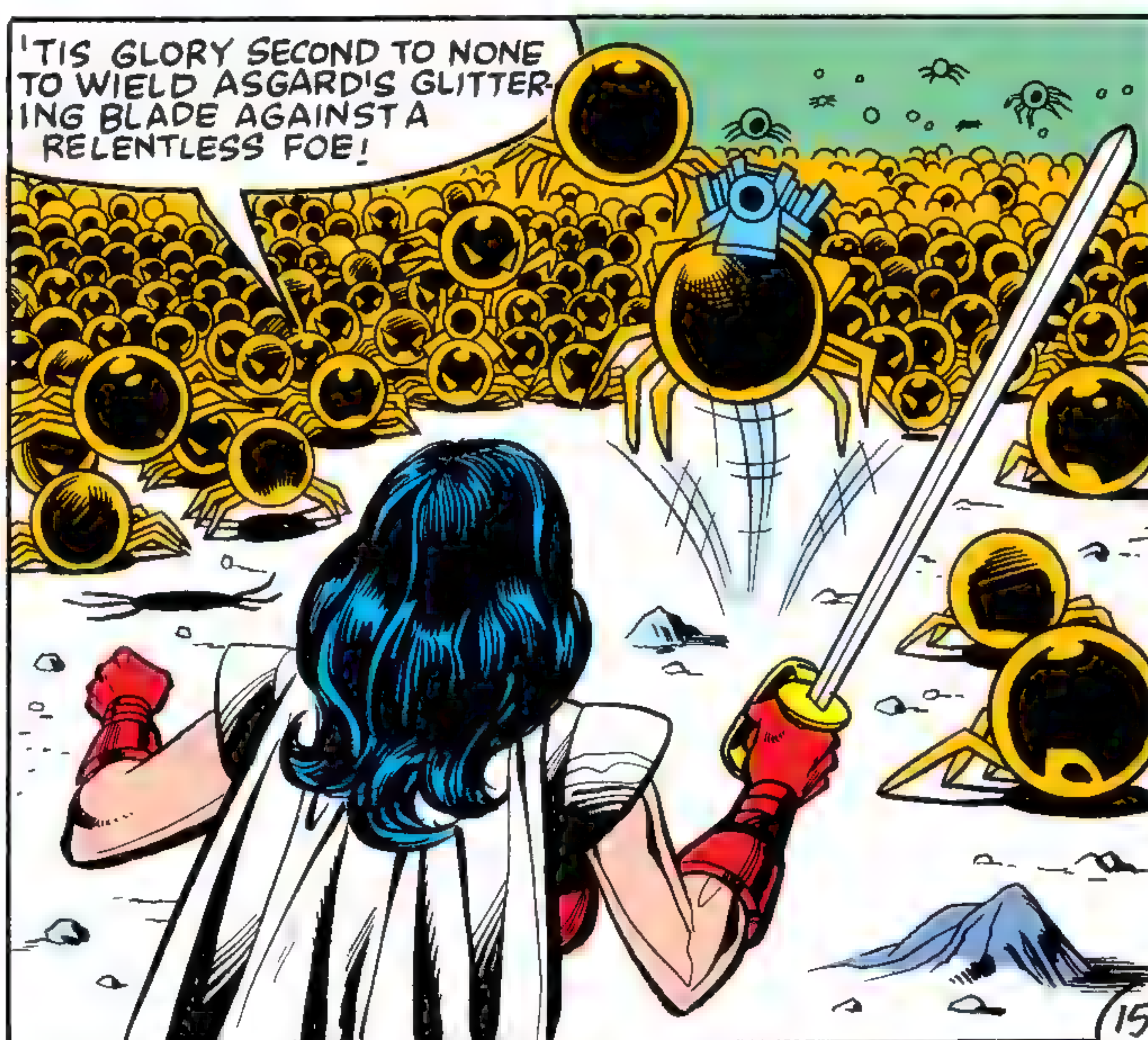
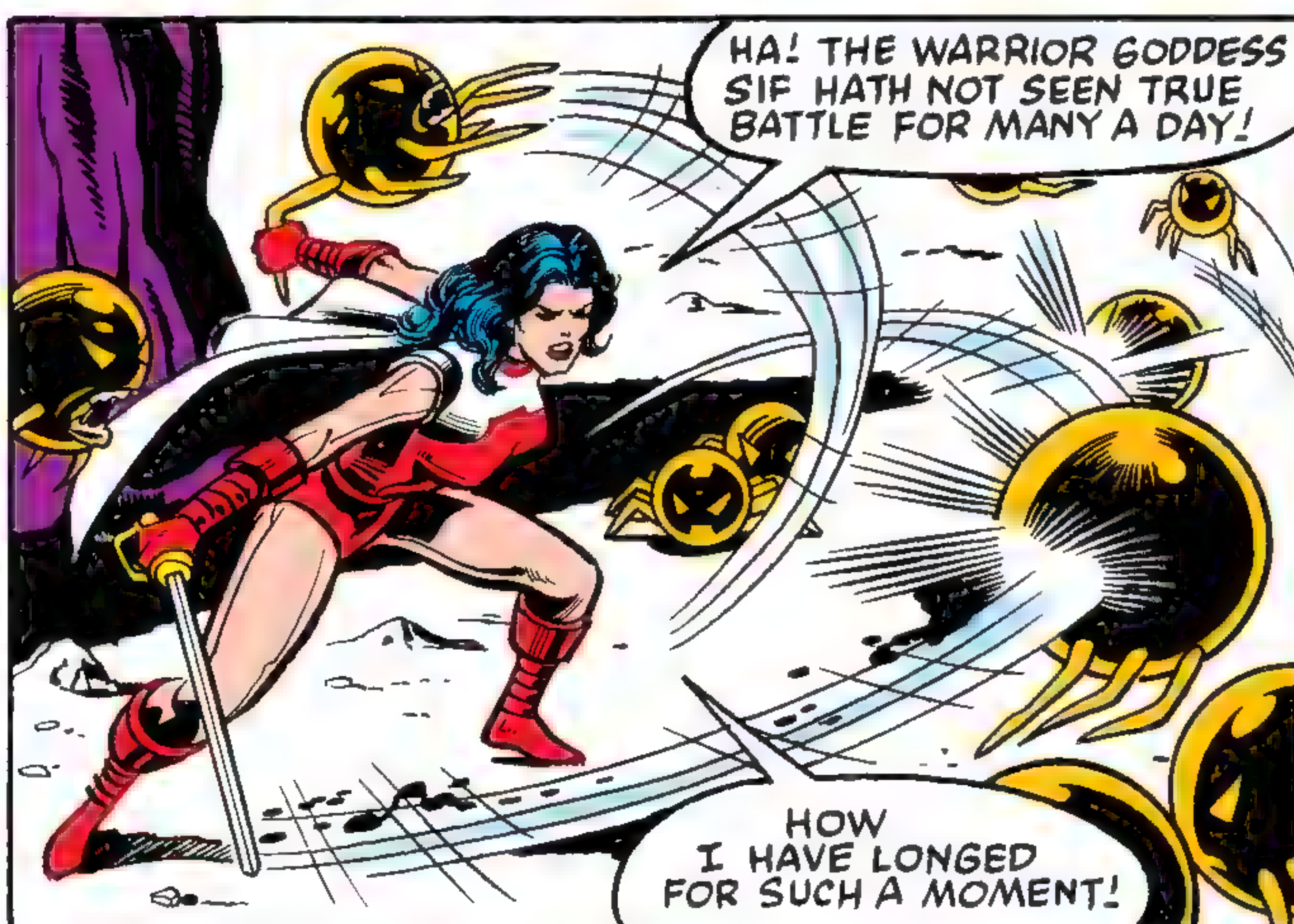
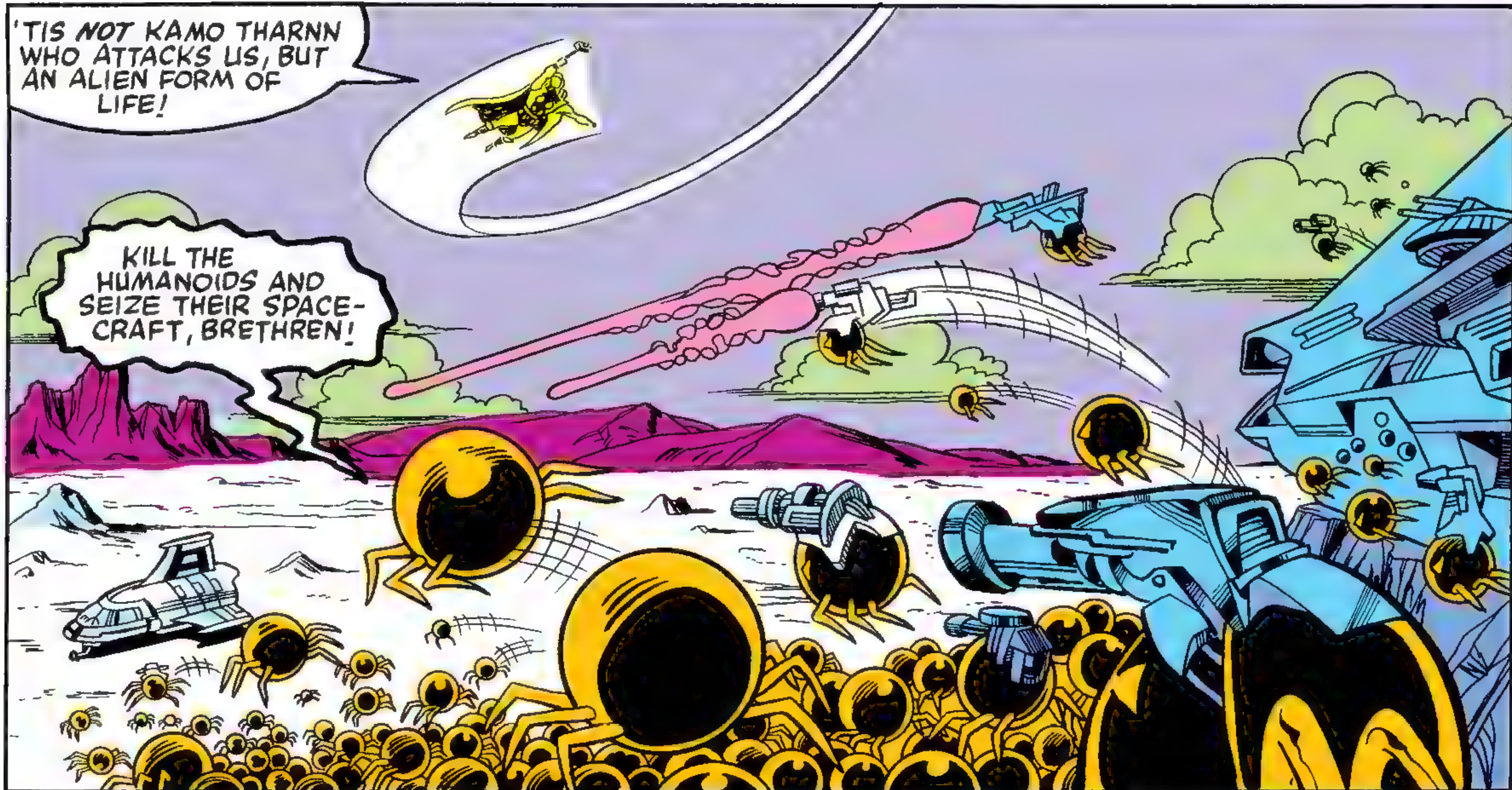
AND SO IT GOES FOR
COUNTLESS HOURS UNTIL...

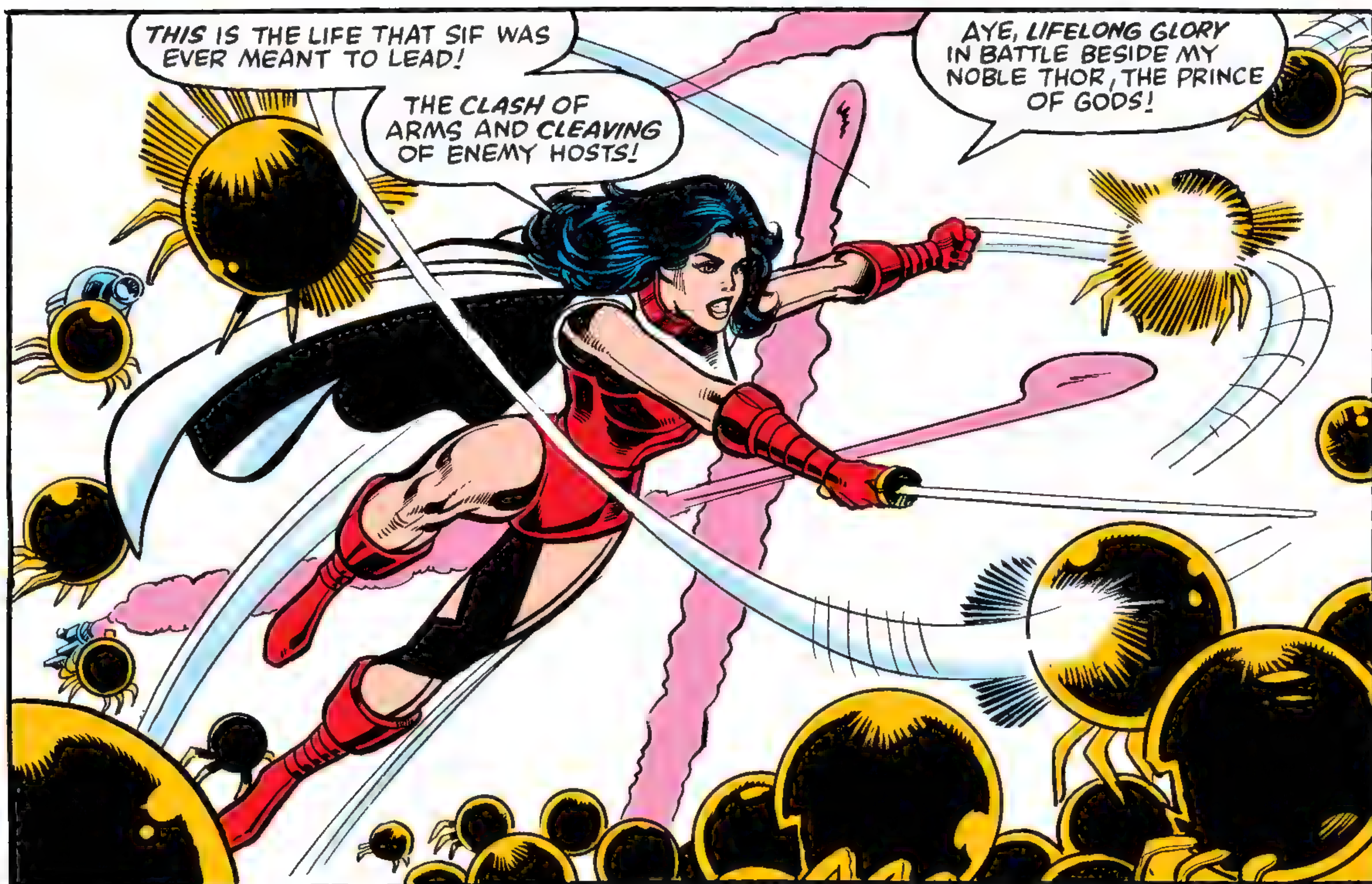
THE SORCERER
DR. STRANGE MYSTICALLY
IMPLANTED THE LOCATION
OF THE RUNESTAFF IN MY
MIND*. IT'S ON YON
PLANET BELOW US.

*LAST ISSUE.





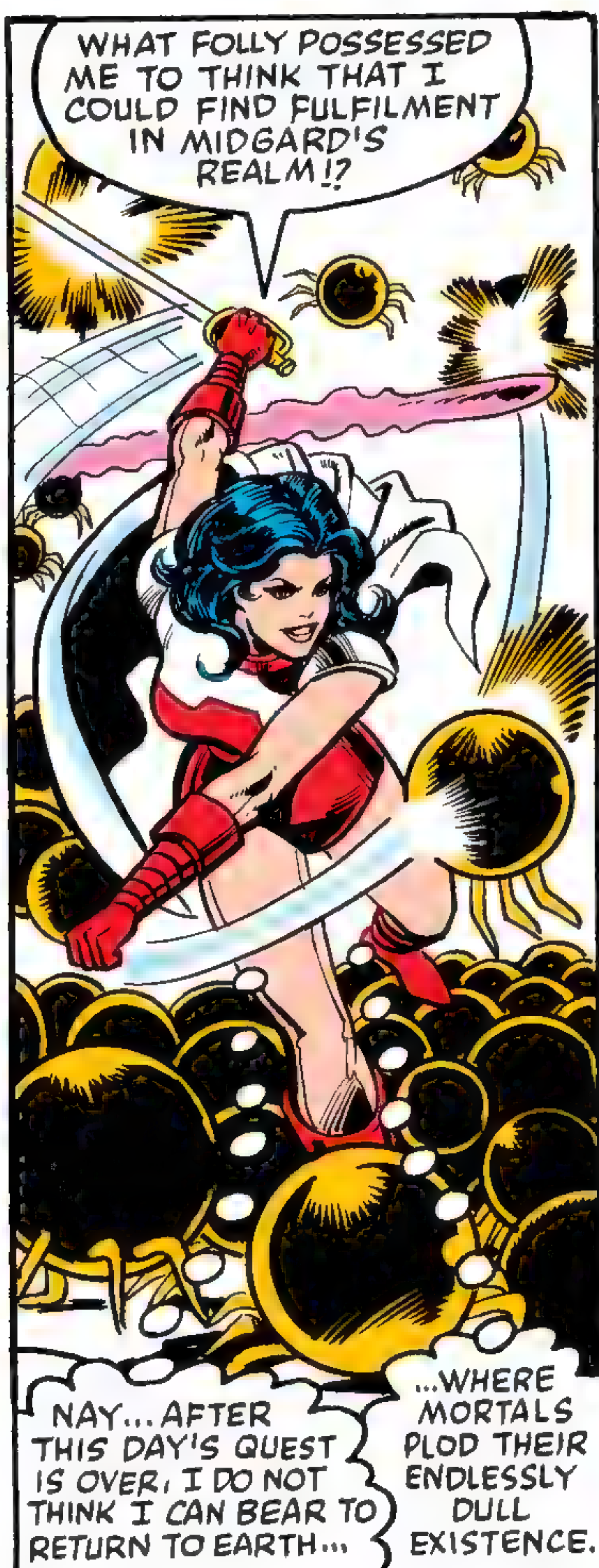




THIS IS THE LIFE THAT SIF WAS
EVER MEANT TO LEAD!

THE CLASH OF
ARMS AND CLEAVING
OF ENEMY HOSTS!

AYE, LIFELONG GLORY
IN BATTLE BESIDE MY
NOBLE THOR, THE PRINCE
OF GODS!



WHAT FOLLY POSSESSED
ME TO THINK THAT I
COULD FIND FULFILMENT
IN MIDGARD'S
REALM!?

NAY... AFTER
THIS DAY'S QUEST
IS OVER, I DO NOT
THINK I CAN BEAR TO
RETURN TO EARTH...

...WHERE
MORTALS
PLOD THEIR
ENDLESSLY
DULL
EXISTENCE.

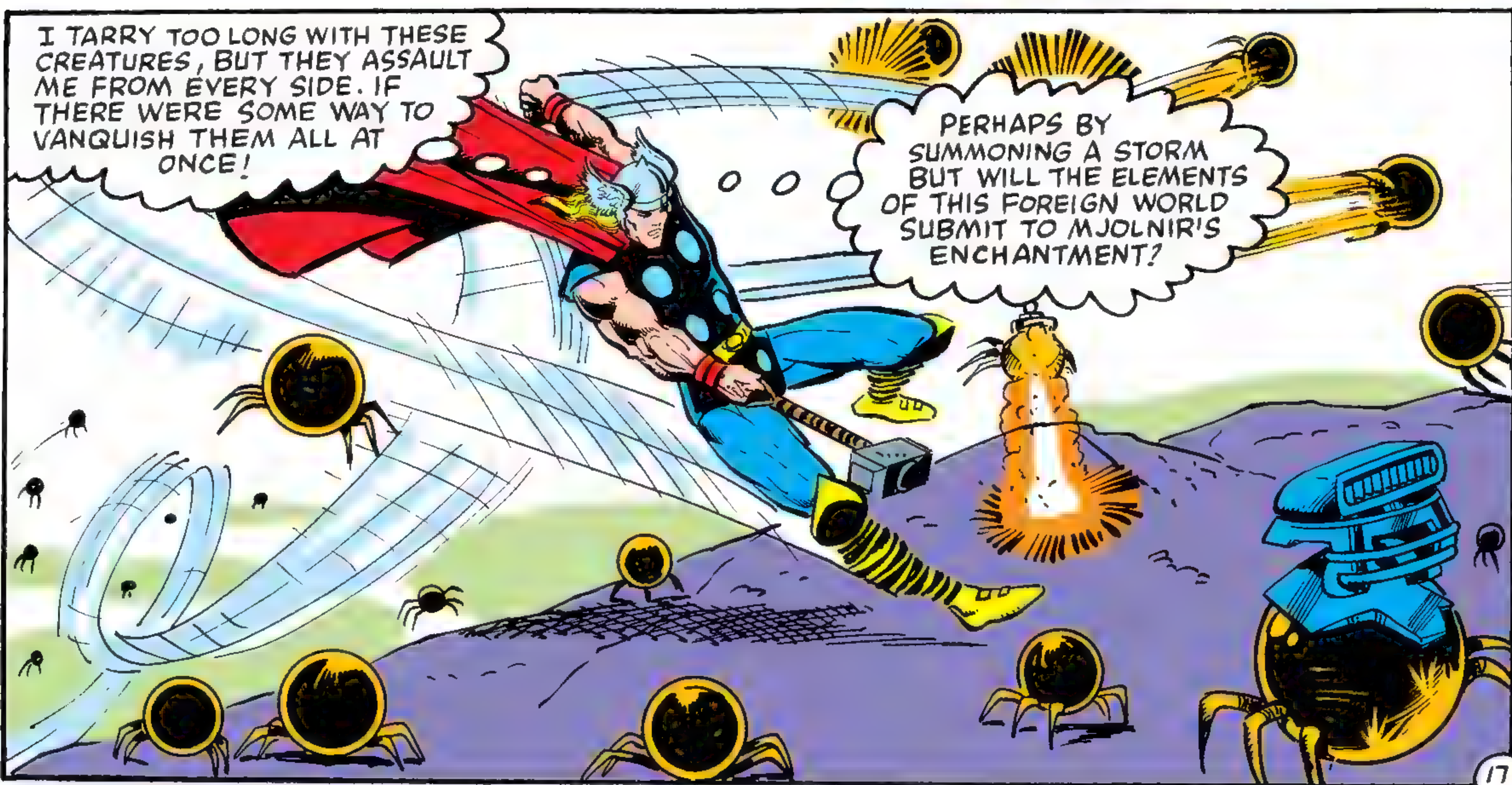
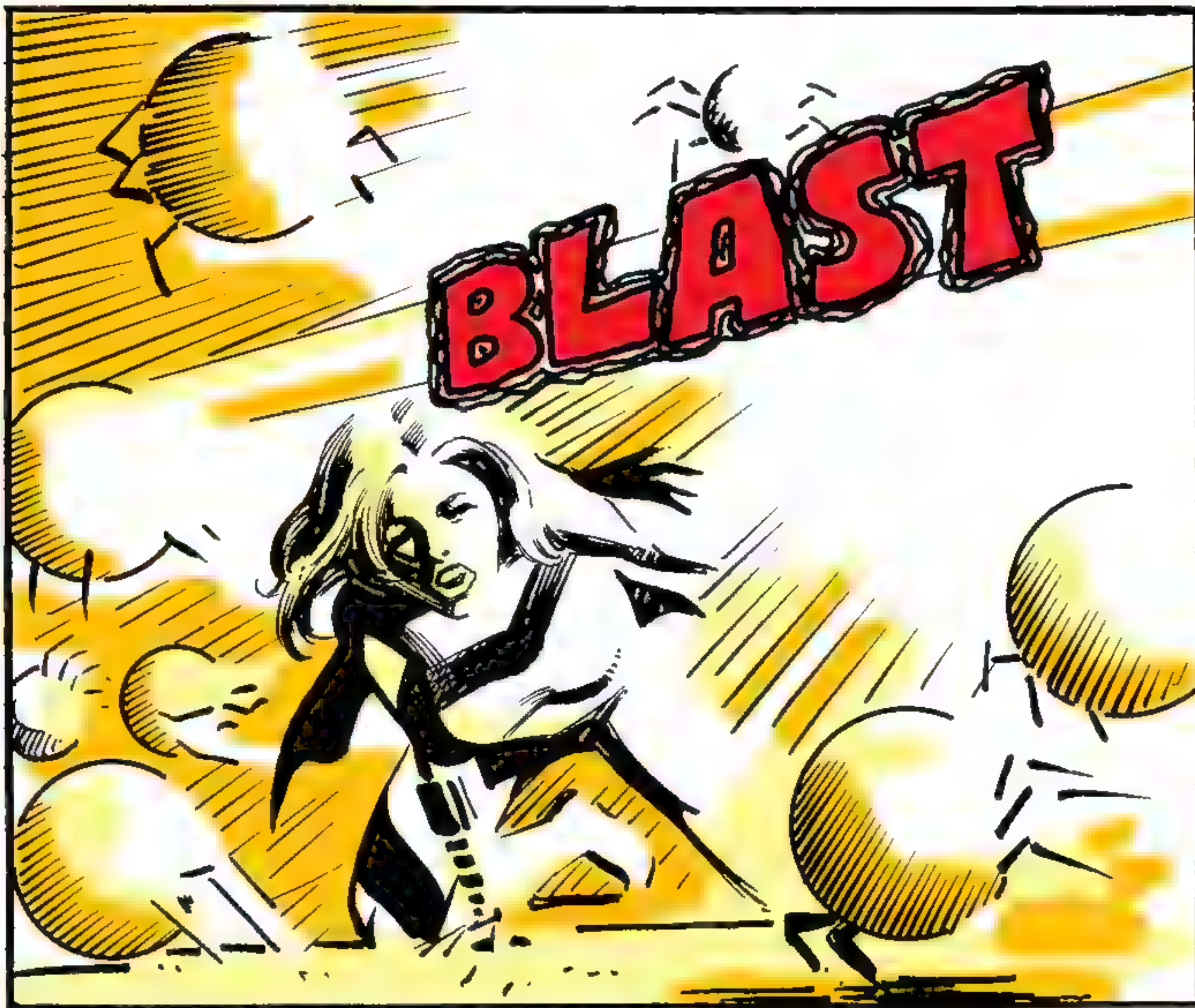


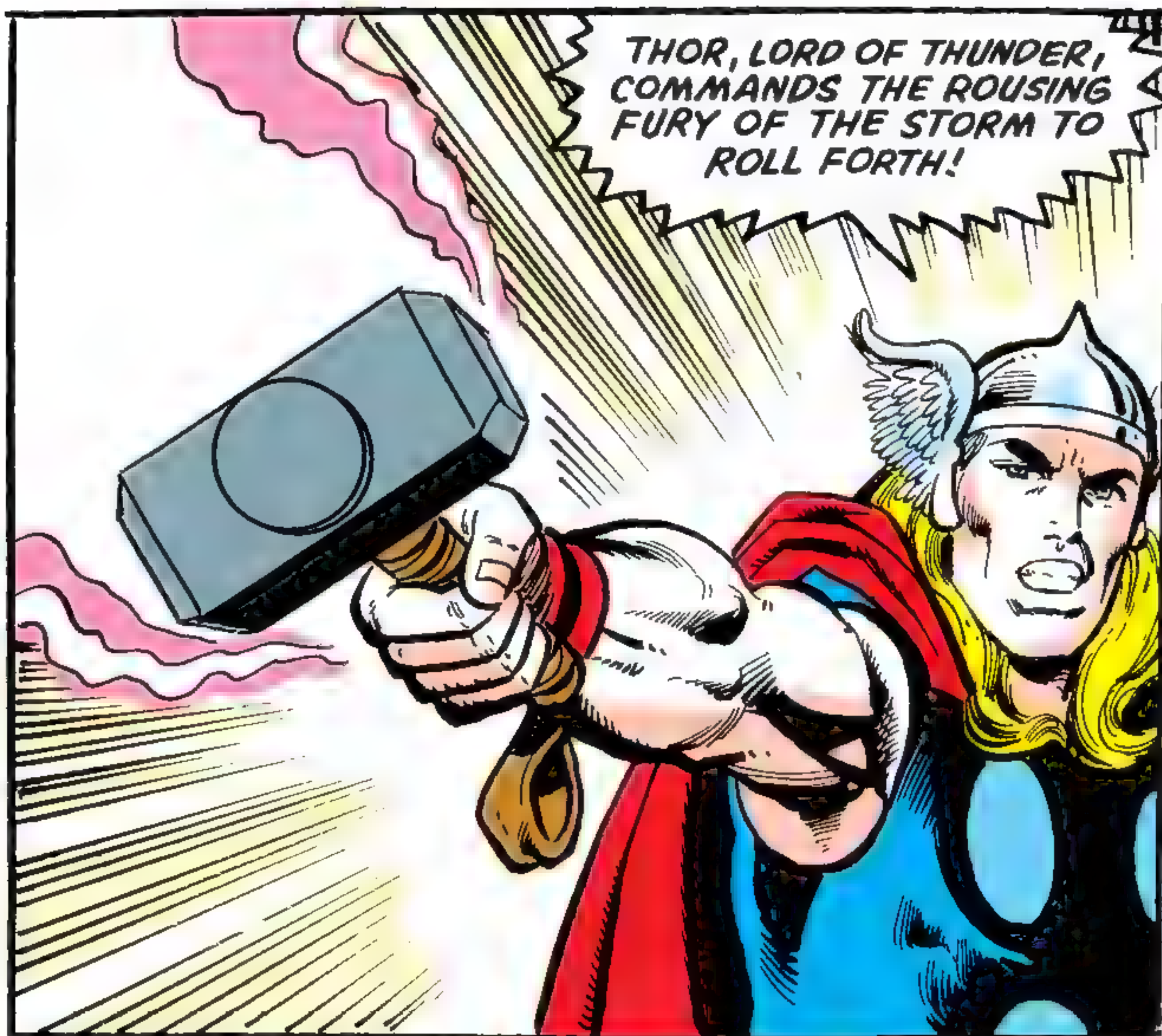
BUT FIRST, SWEET
VICTORY MUST BE
MINE!



DARE YOU BOAST OF
VICTORY, HUMANOID?!
YOU ARE BUT ONE
AGAINST SO MANY!

NO!
THEY
OVERRUN
ME!





THOR, LORD OF THUNDER,
COMMANDS THE ROUSING
FURY OF THE STORM TO
ROLL FORTH!

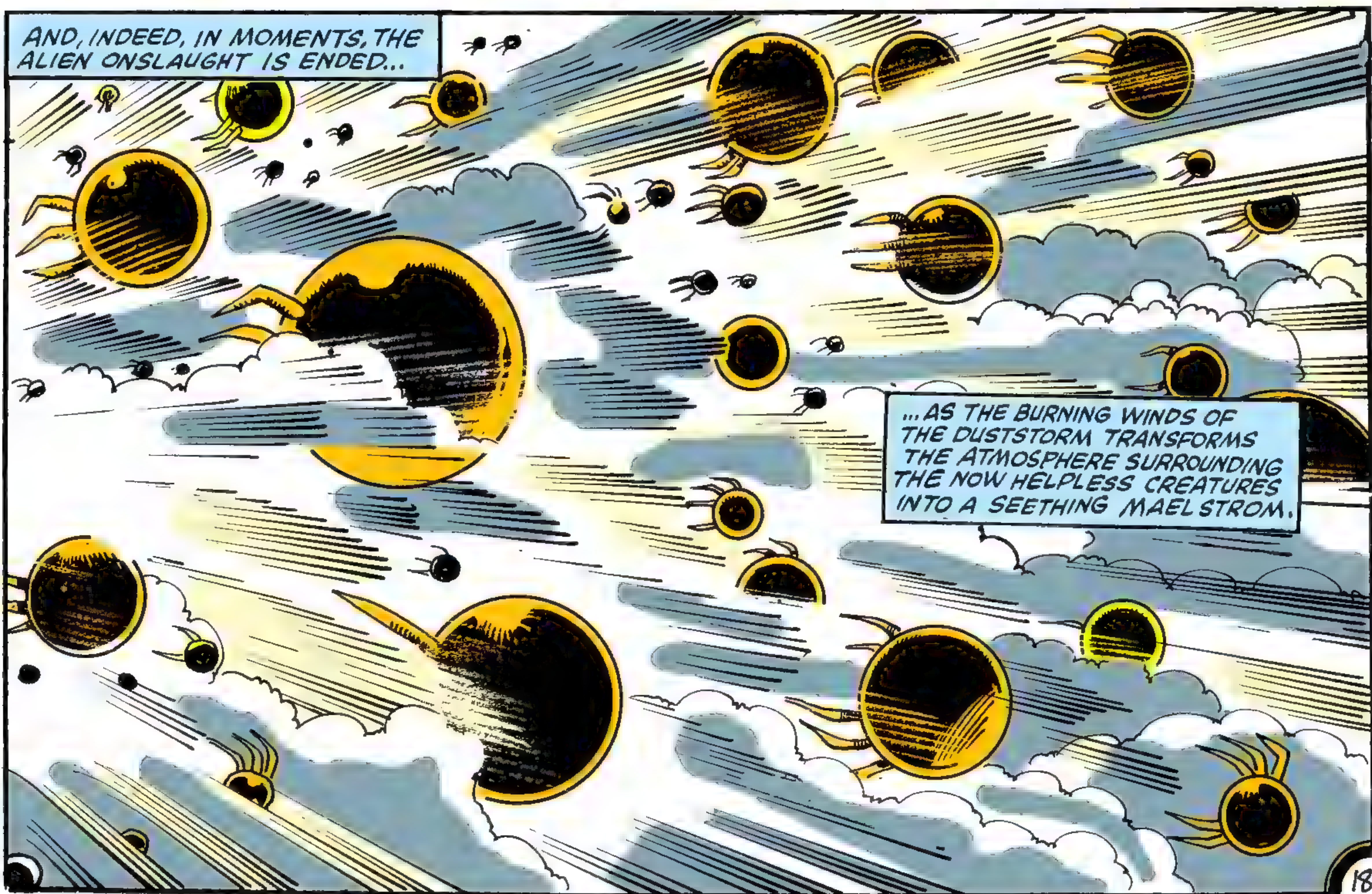


'TIS AS I FEARED--
THESE HEAVENS HARKEN
NOT.



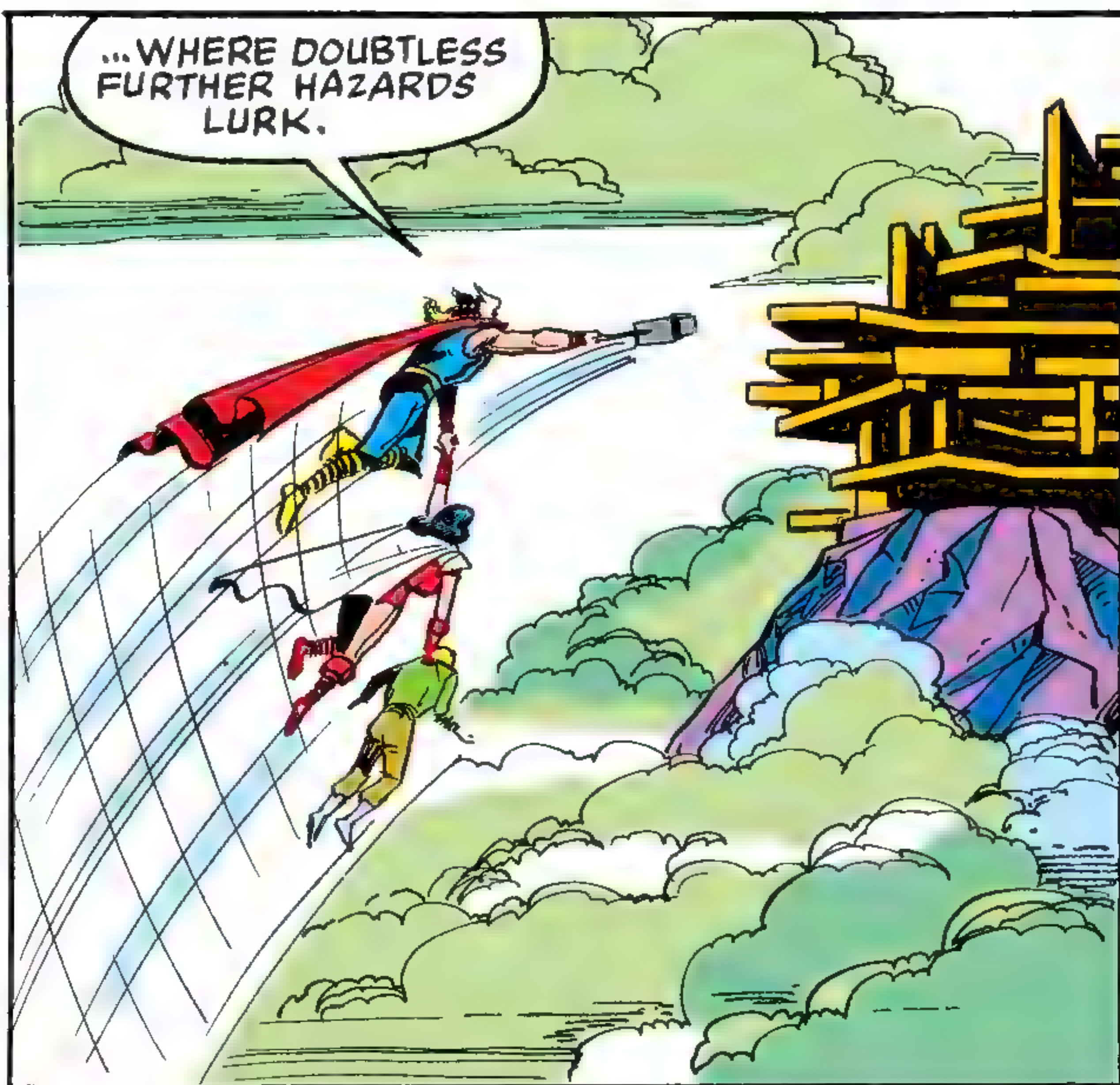
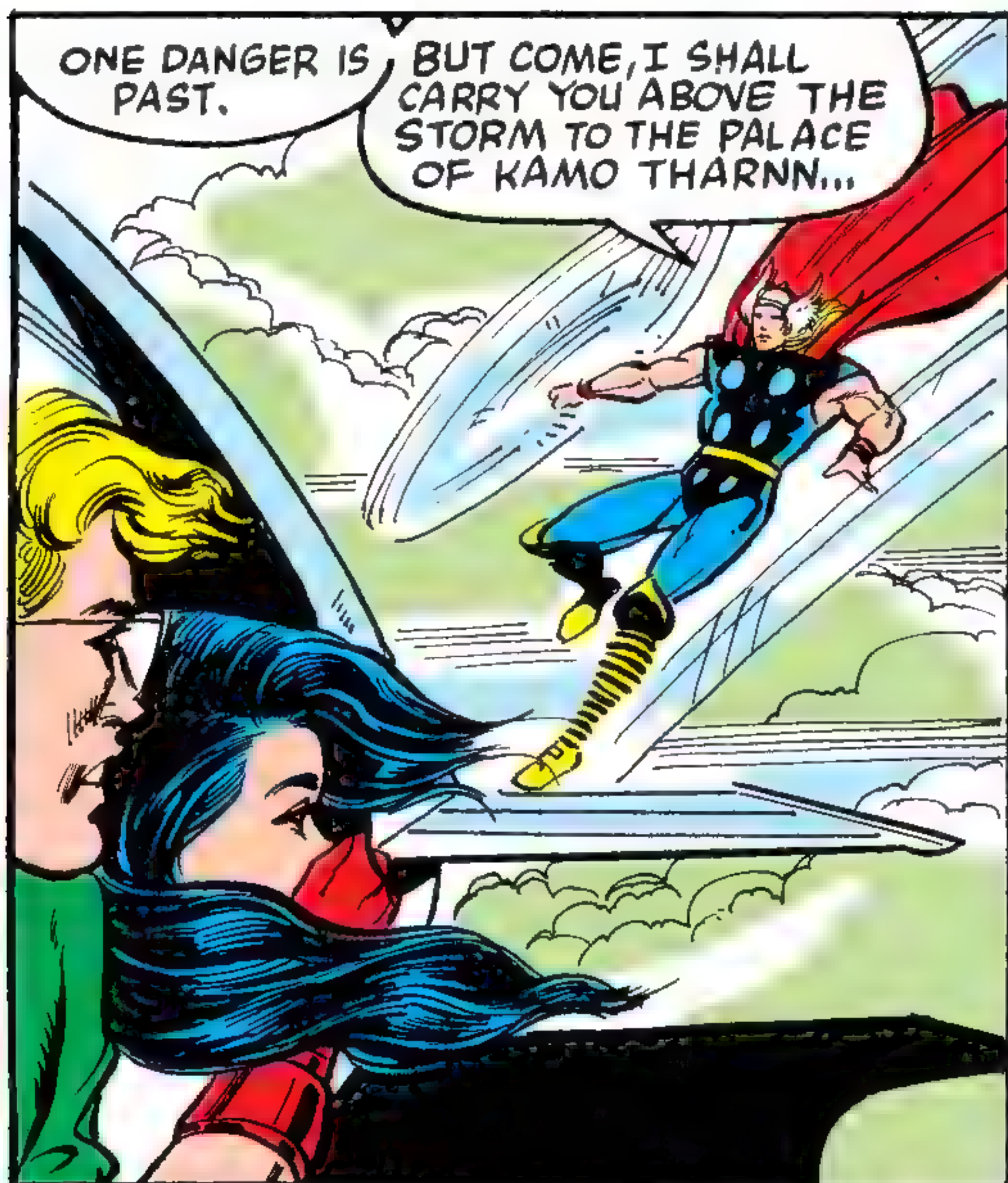
BUT THEN...

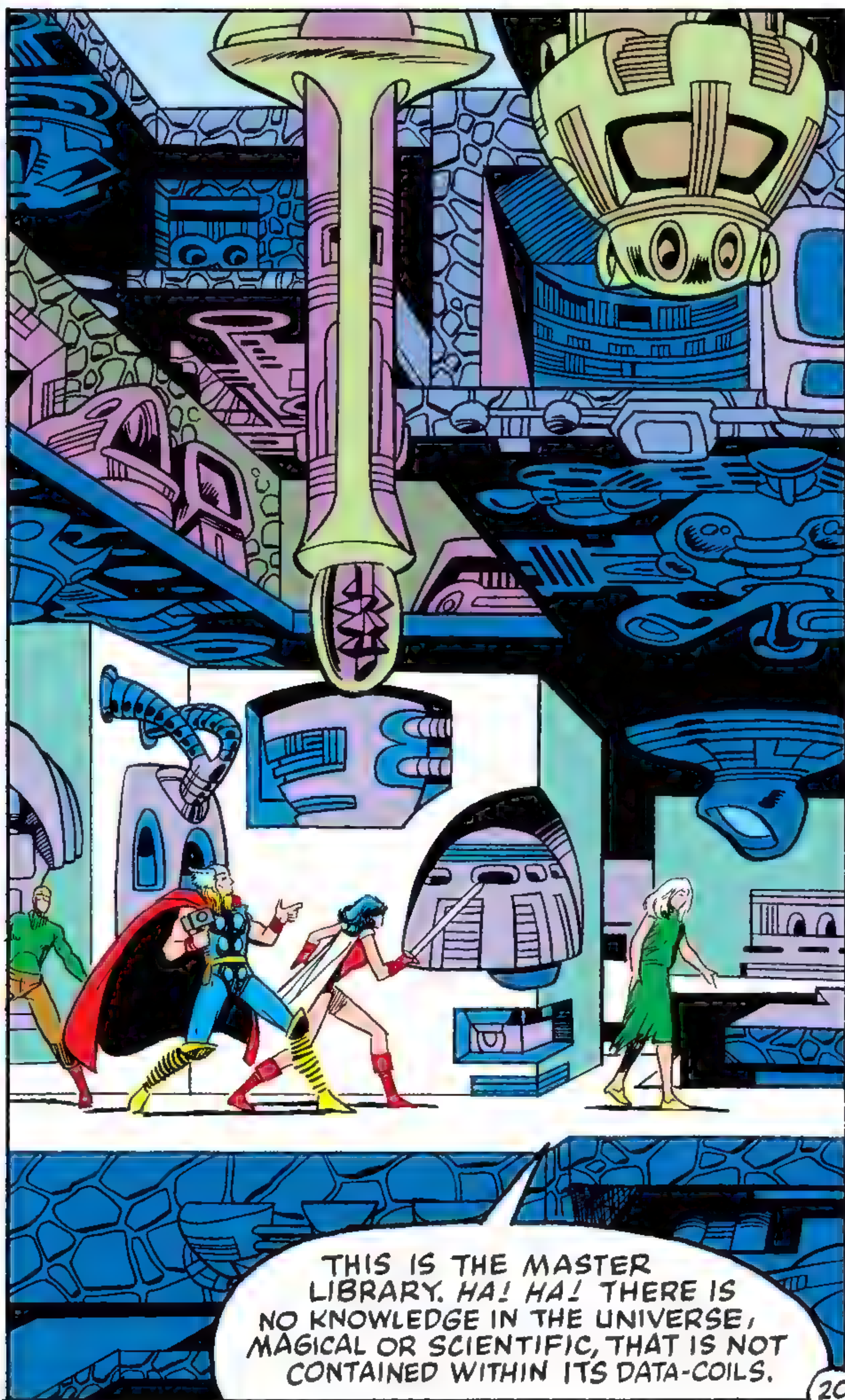
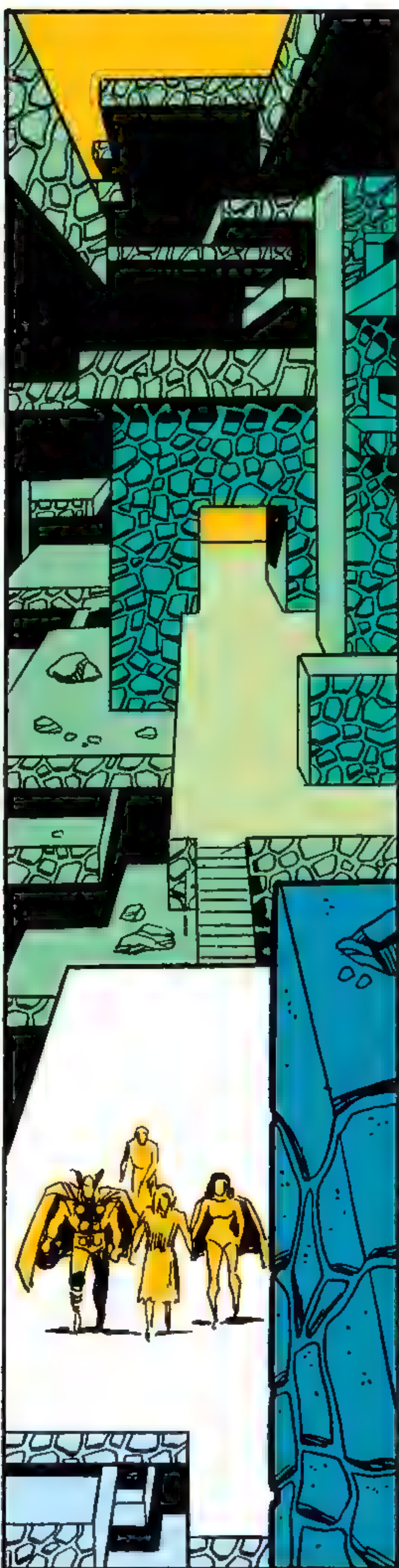
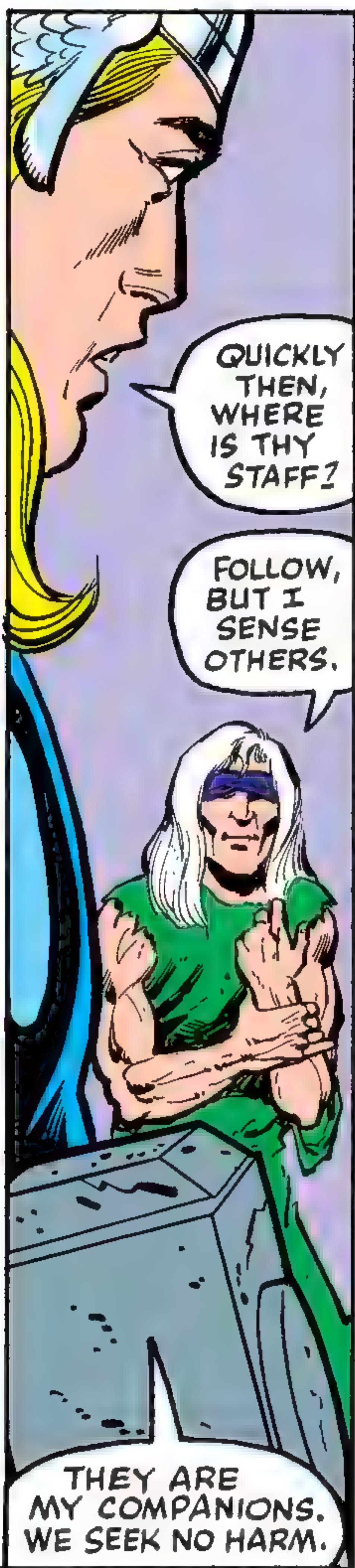
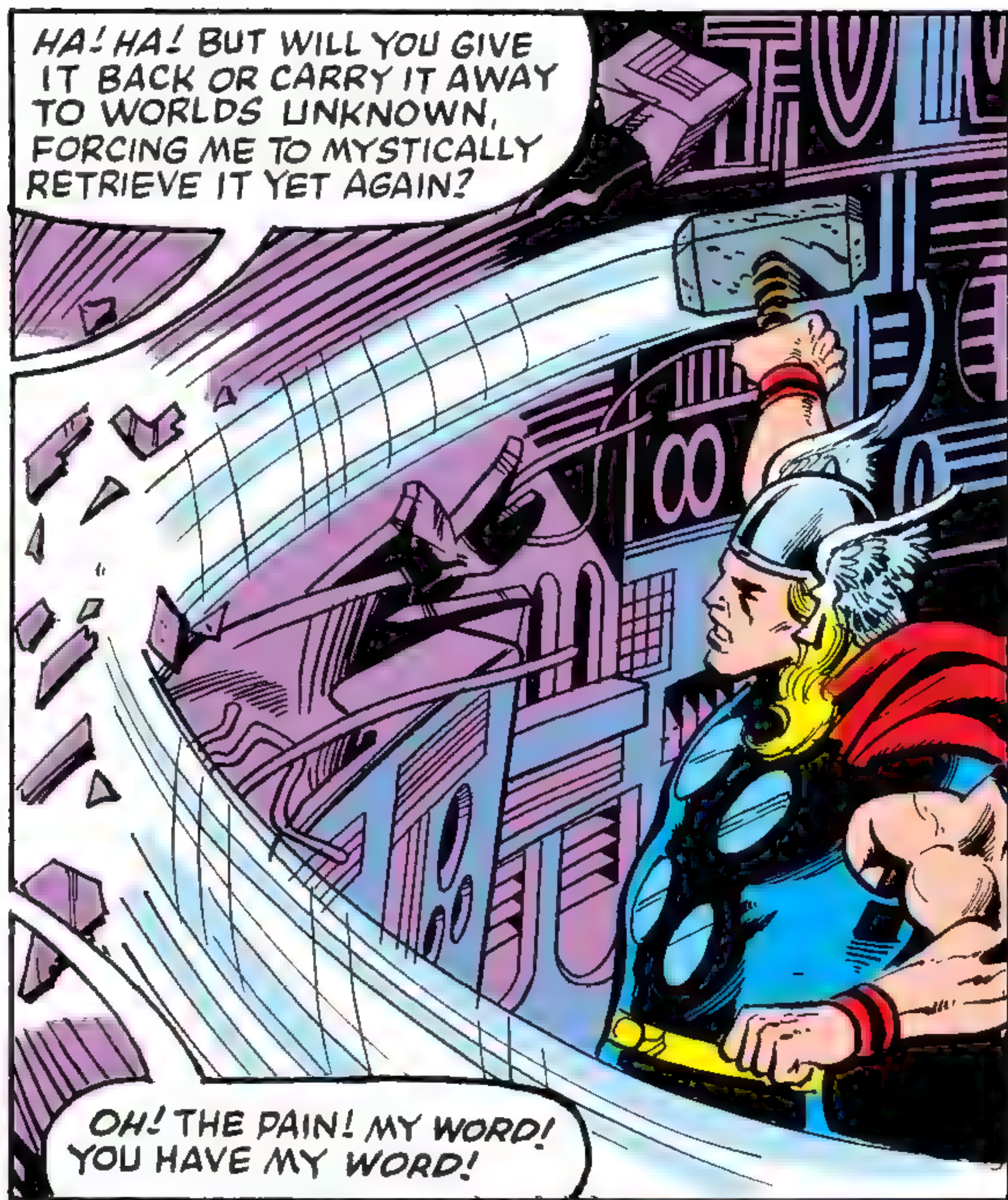
NO, I HAVE ERRED--
FOR THE RAGING DUST-
STORM RISING FROM THE
GROUND IS NATIVE TO
THIS PLANET!

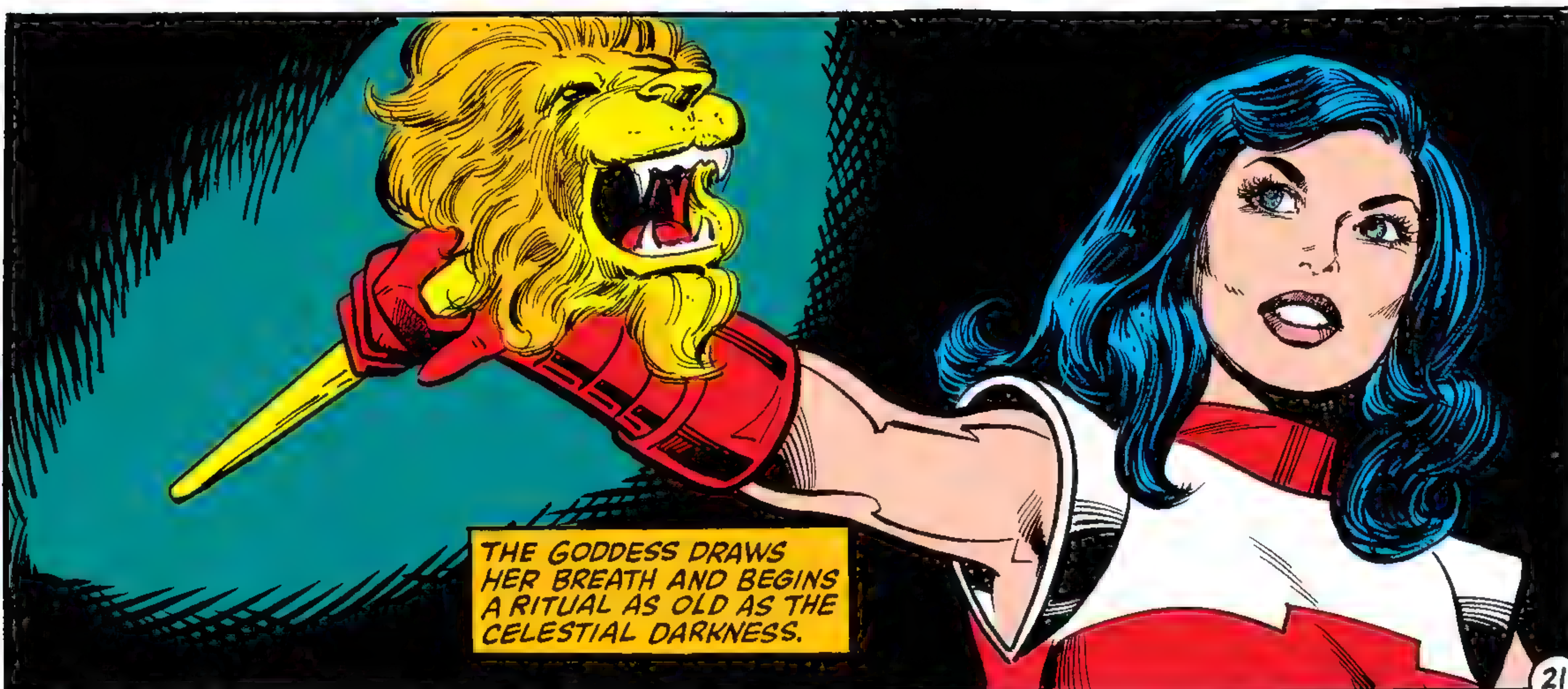
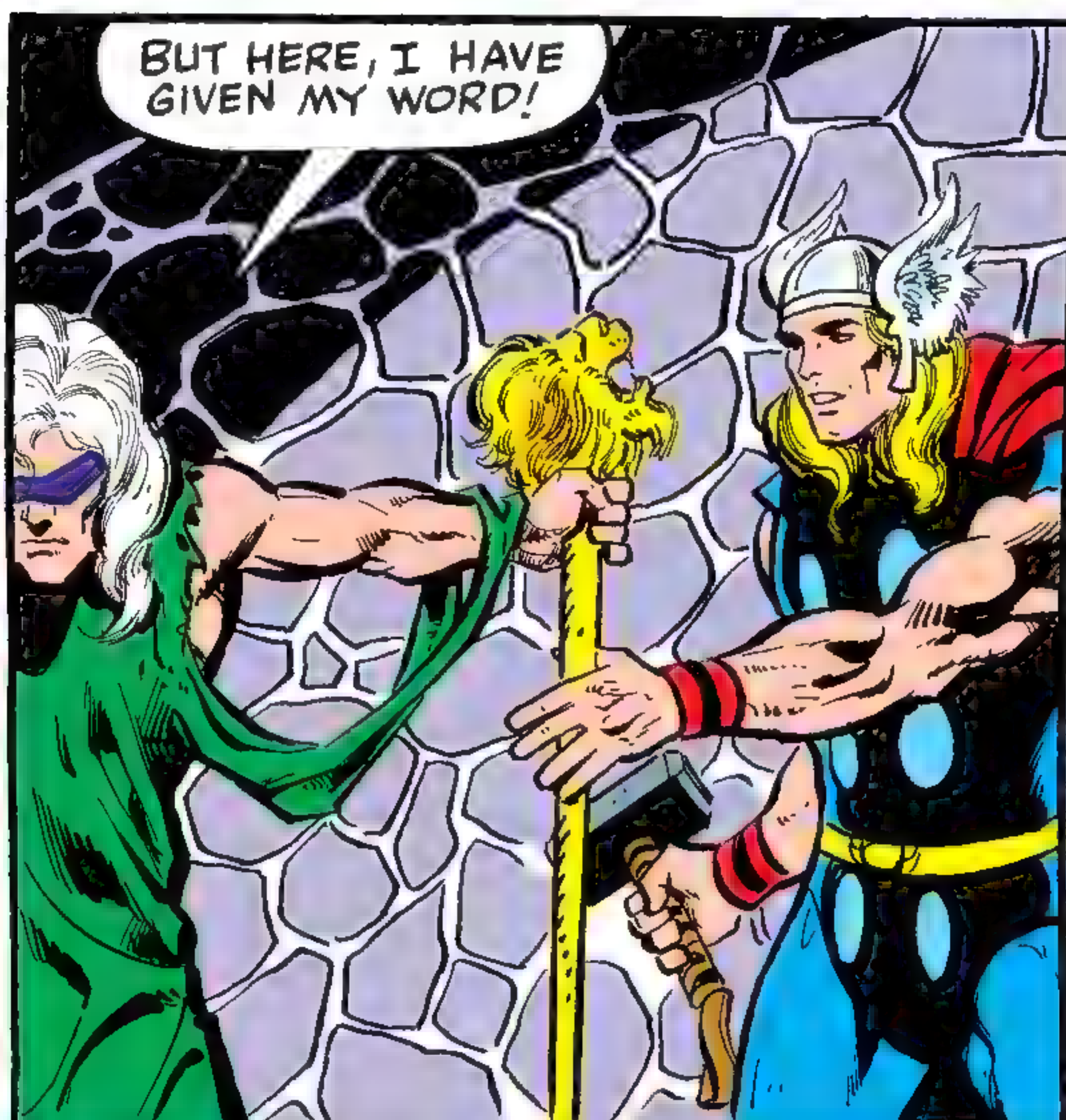
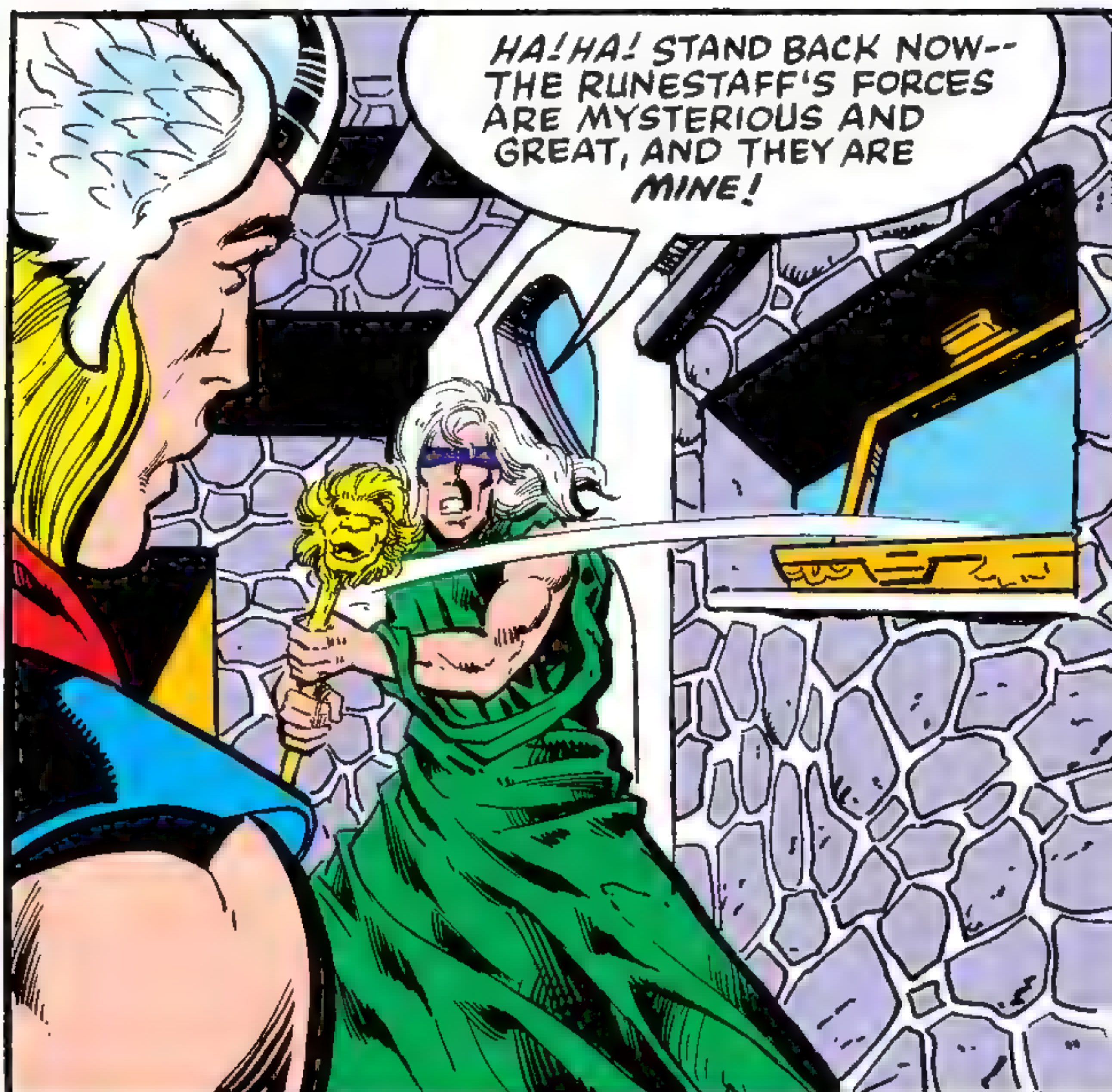


AND, INDEED, IN MOMENTS, THE
ALIEN ONSLAUGHT IS ENDED...

...AS THE BURNING WINDS OF
THE DUSTSTORM TRANSFORMS
THE ATMOSPHERE SURROUNDING
THE NOW HELPLESS CREATURES
INTO A SEETHING MAELSTROM.







THE AIR IS CHARGED
WITH EMERALD FIRE.



AT LAST JANE FOSTER SHALL
BE RESTORED TO THE PHYSICAL
PLANE, AND I SHALL HAVE
MADE UP FOR MY NEGLECT
TO HER PLIGHT THESE MONTHS
PAST.

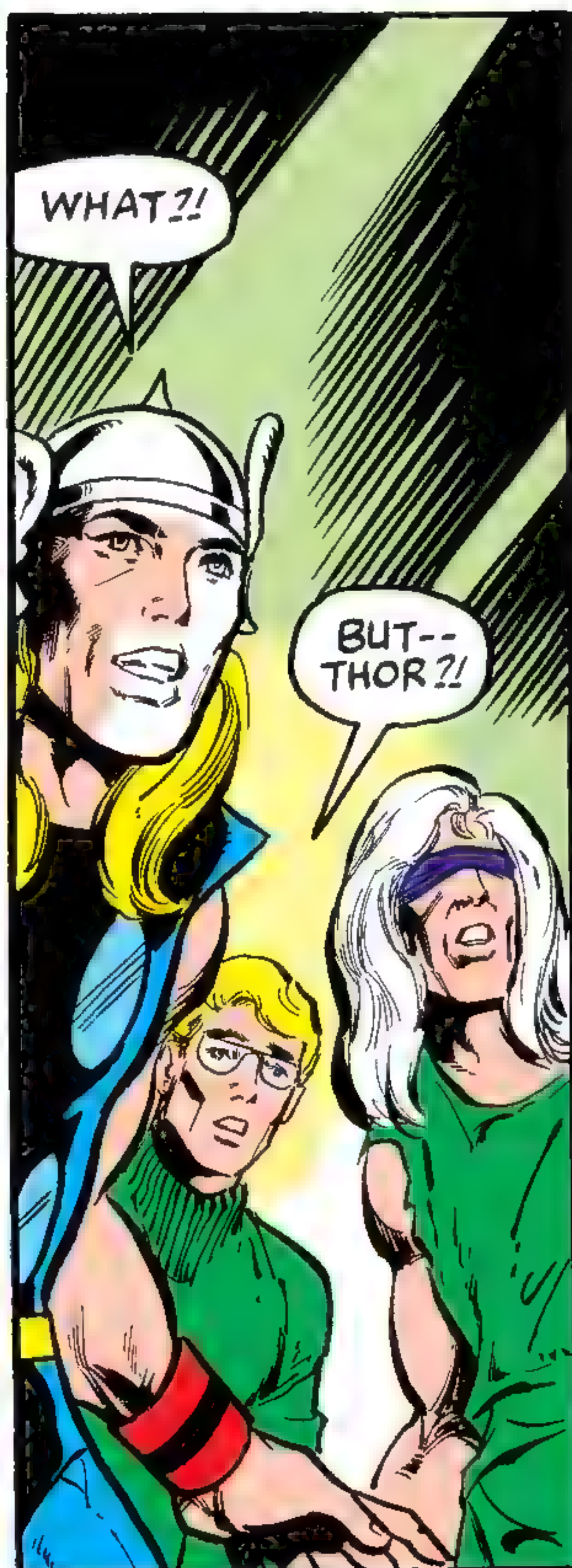


AND THEN...



WHAT?!

BUT--
THOR?!



MY PRINCE--THE RITUAL
HAS FAILED! I TRIED TO
SUMMON JANE FOSTER'S
ESSENCE FROM WITHIN
ME-- BUT IT WAS NOT
THERE.

I FEAR
SHE MAY BE
LOST TO US
FOREVER!



NEXT

INTO THE
RUNESTAFF!

60¢

335
SEPT
02450

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TM

THE MIGHTY THOR®



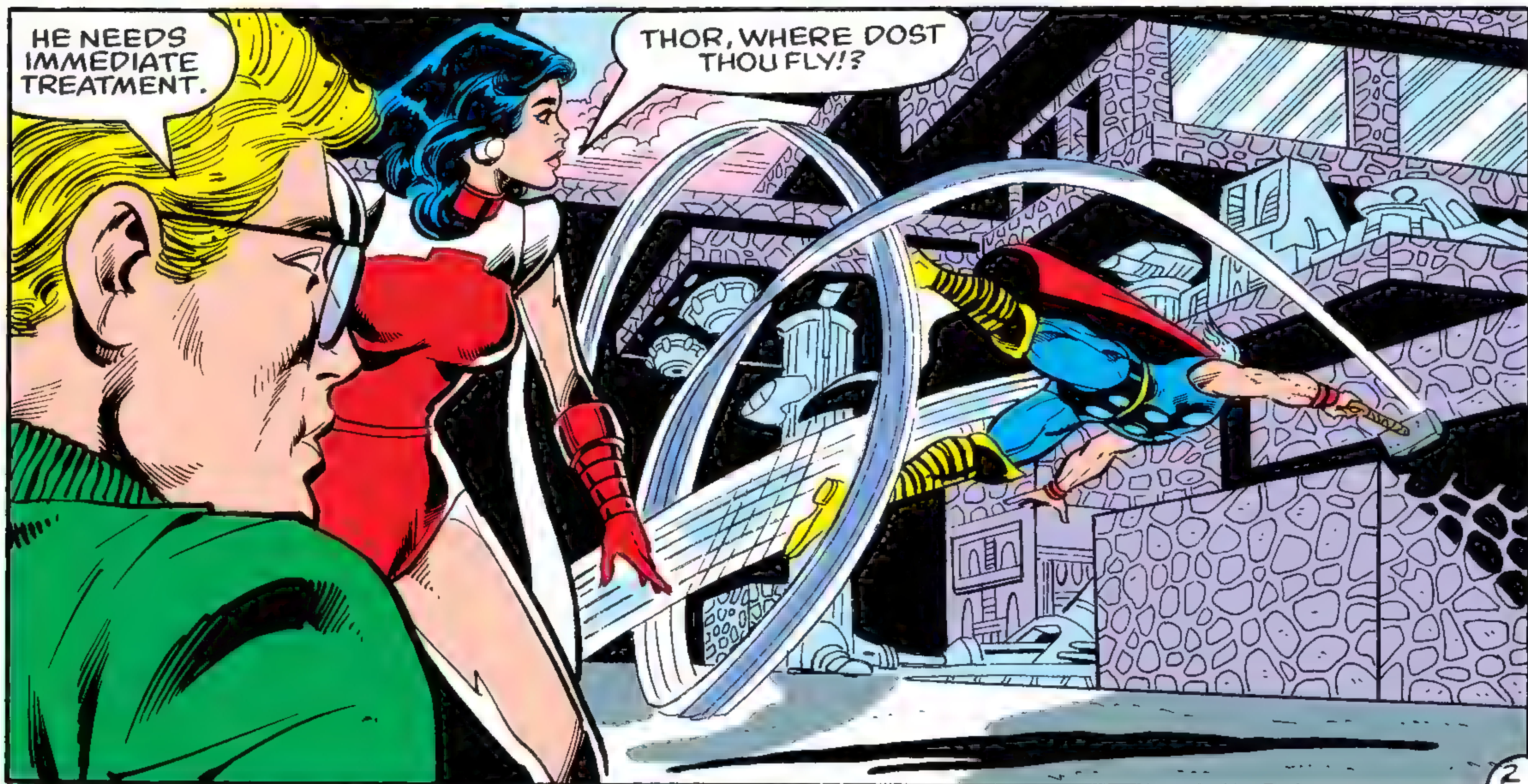
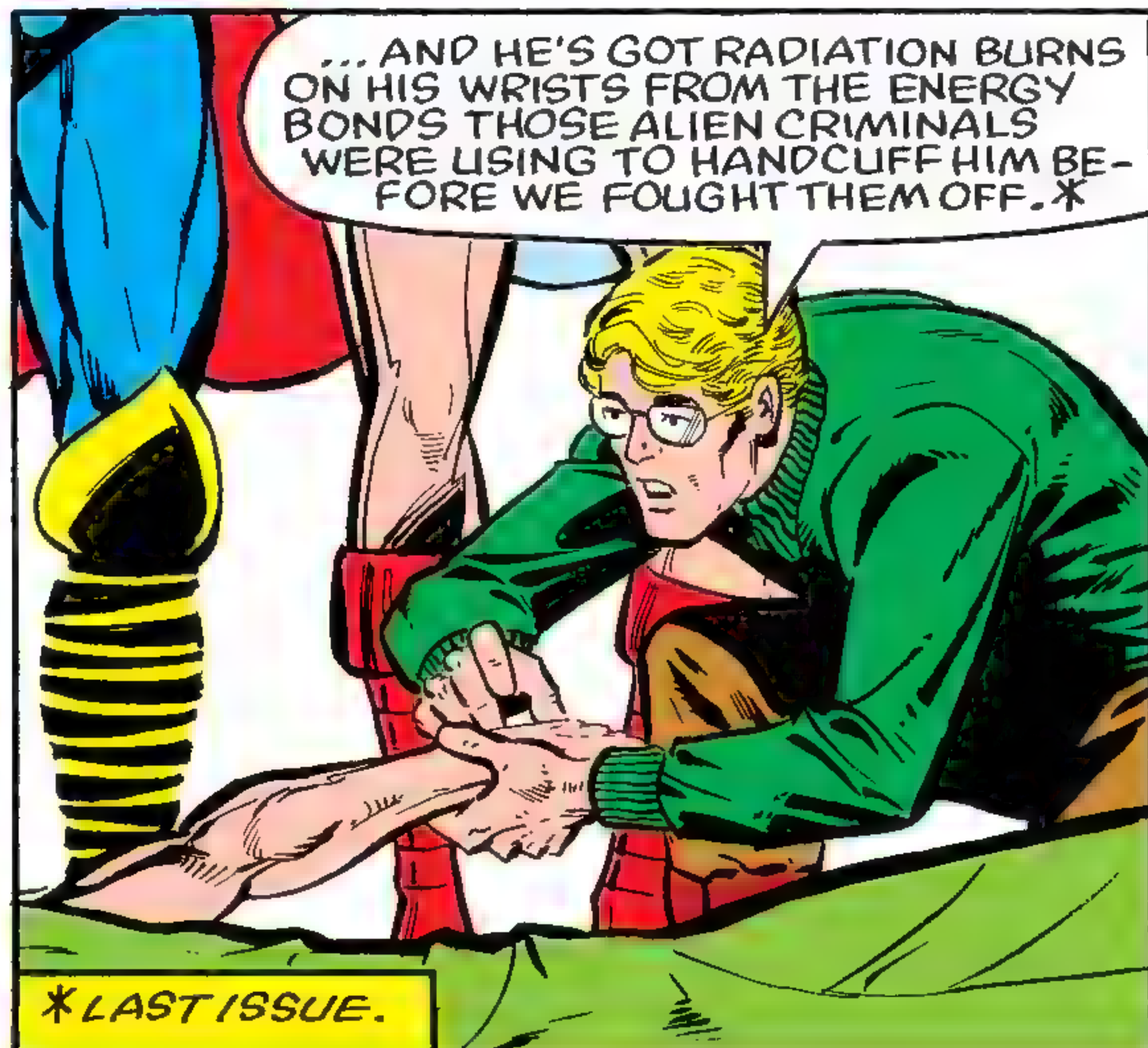
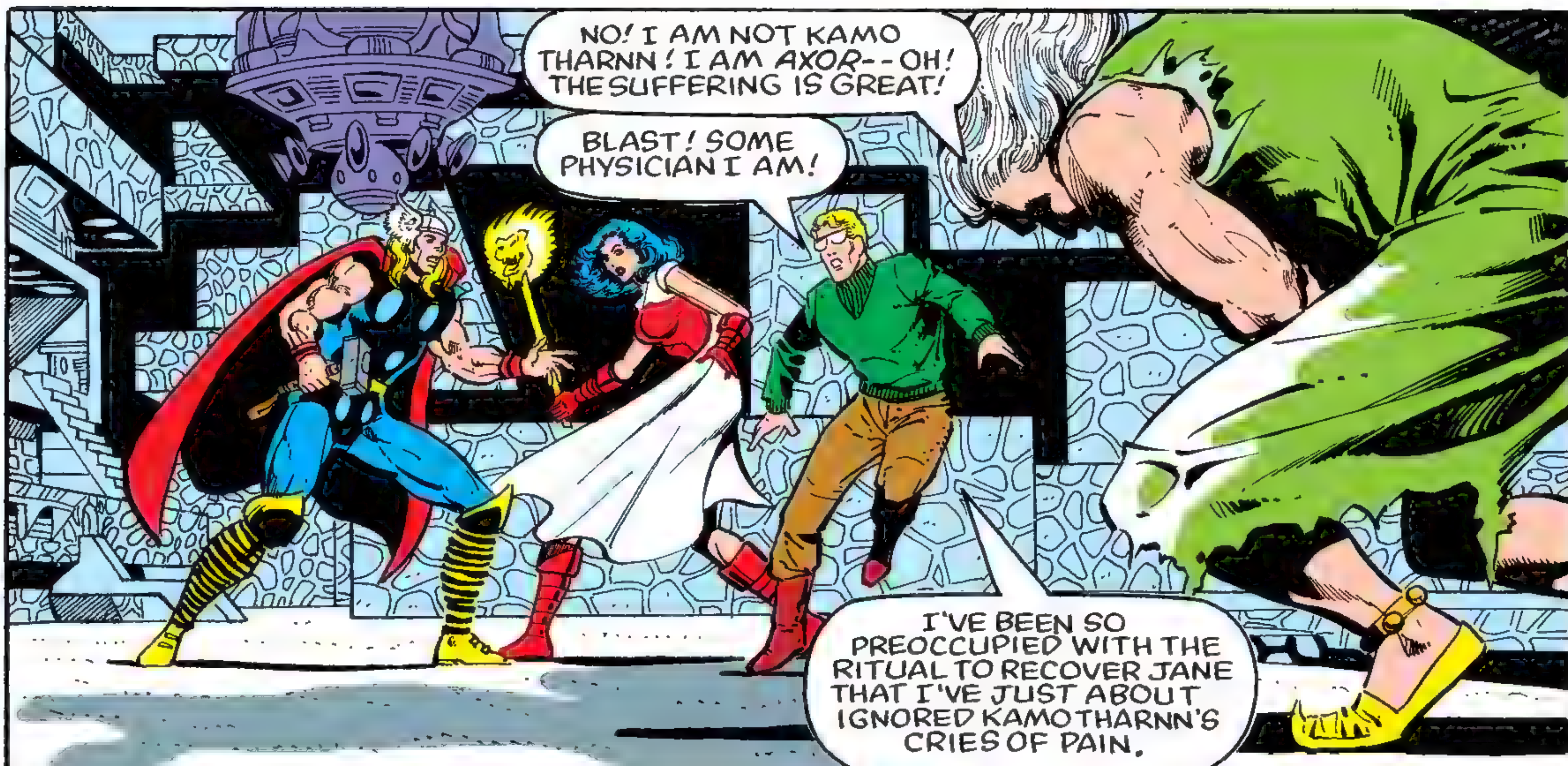
AT LAST..JANE FOSTER!

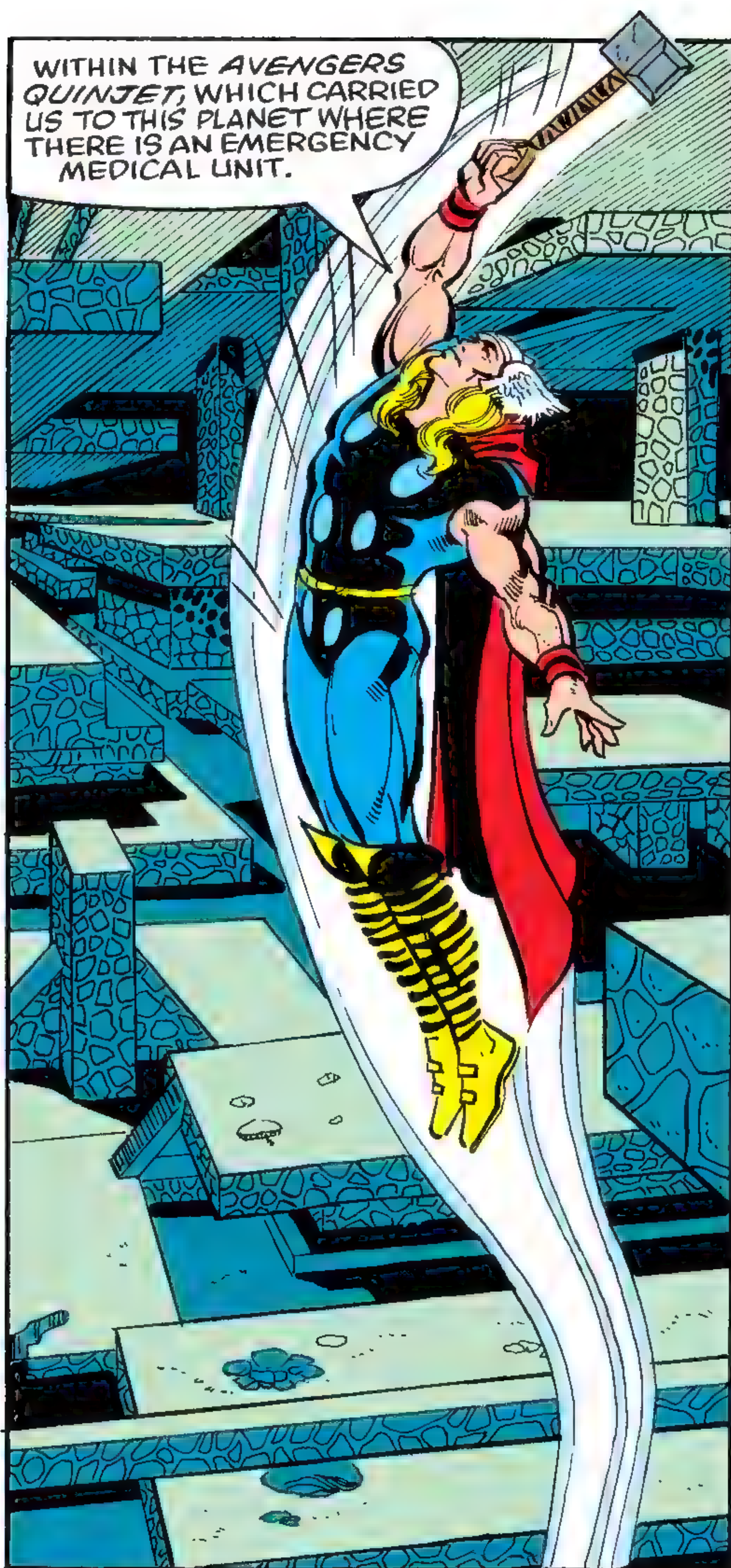
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**

RUNEQUEST'S END!

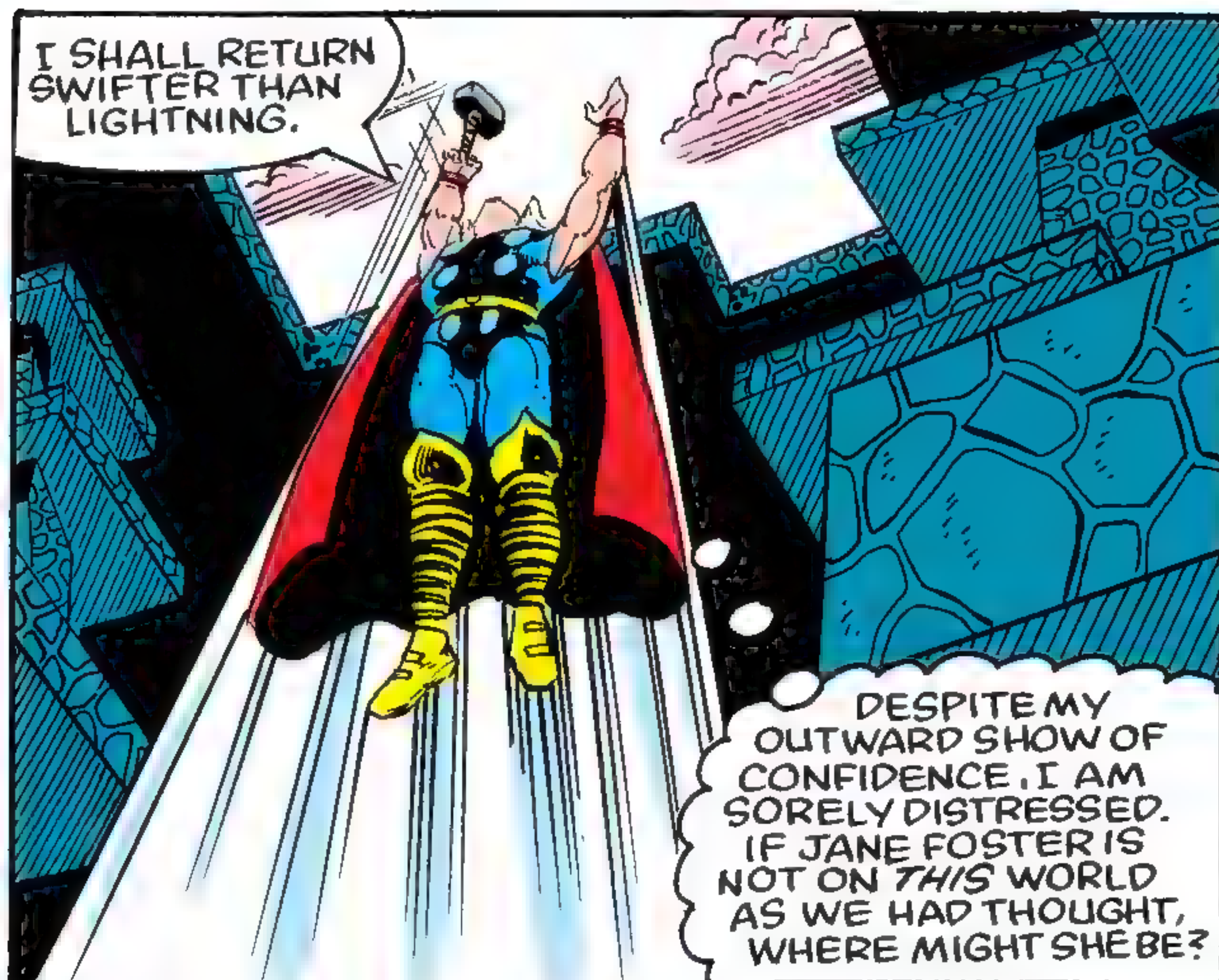


ALAN ZELENETZ MARK BRIGHT VINCE COLLETTA JANICE CHIANG GEORGE ROUSSOS MARK GRUENWALD JIM SHOOTER
SCRIPTER PENCILER INKER LETTER COLORIST EDITOR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



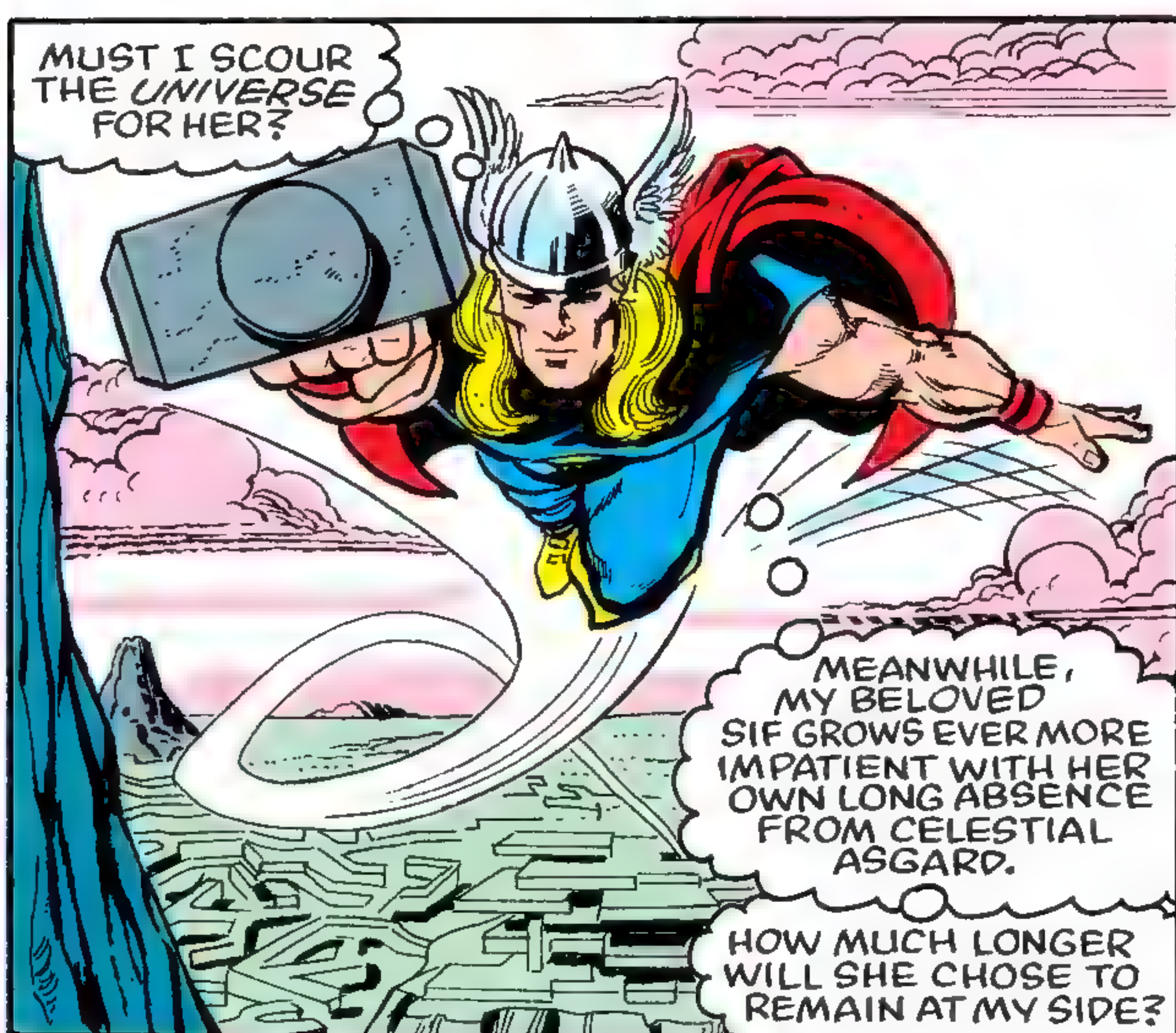


WITHIN THE AVENGERS QUINJET, WHICH CARRIED US TO THIS PLANET WHERE THERE IS AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL UNIT.



I SHALL RETURN SWIFTER THAN LIGHTNING.

DESPITE MY OUTWARD SHOW OF CONFIDENCE, I AM SORELY DISTRESSED. IF JANE FOSTER IS NOT ON *THIS* WORLD AS WE HAD THOUGHT, WHERE MIGHT SHE BE?



MUST I SCOUR THE *UNIVERSE* FOR HER?

MEANWHILE, MY BELOVED SIF GROWS EVER MORE IMPATIENT WITH HER OWN LONG ABSENCE FROM CELESTIAL ASGARD.

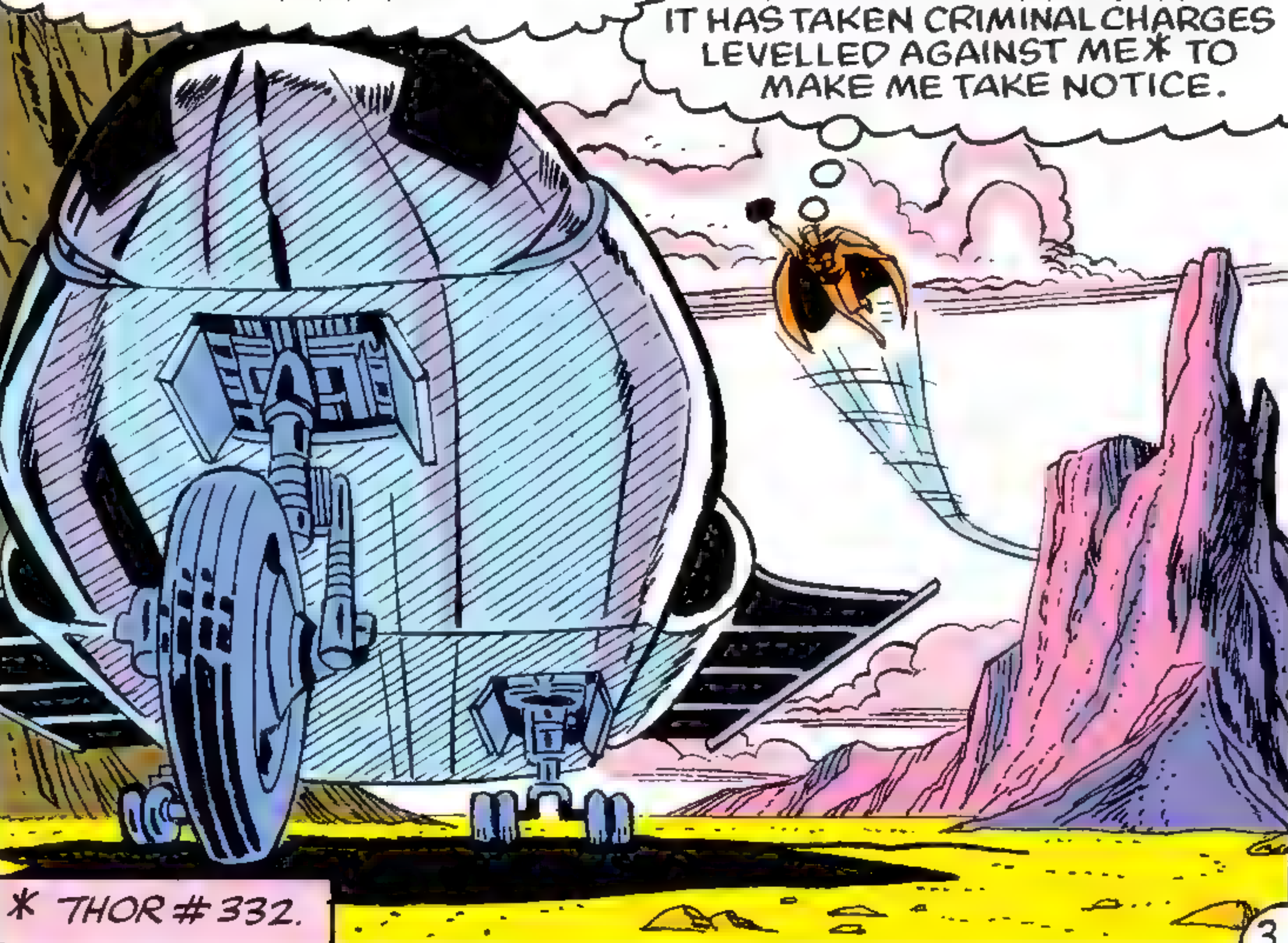
HOW MUCH LONGER WILL SHE CHOSE TO REMAIN AT MY SIDE?



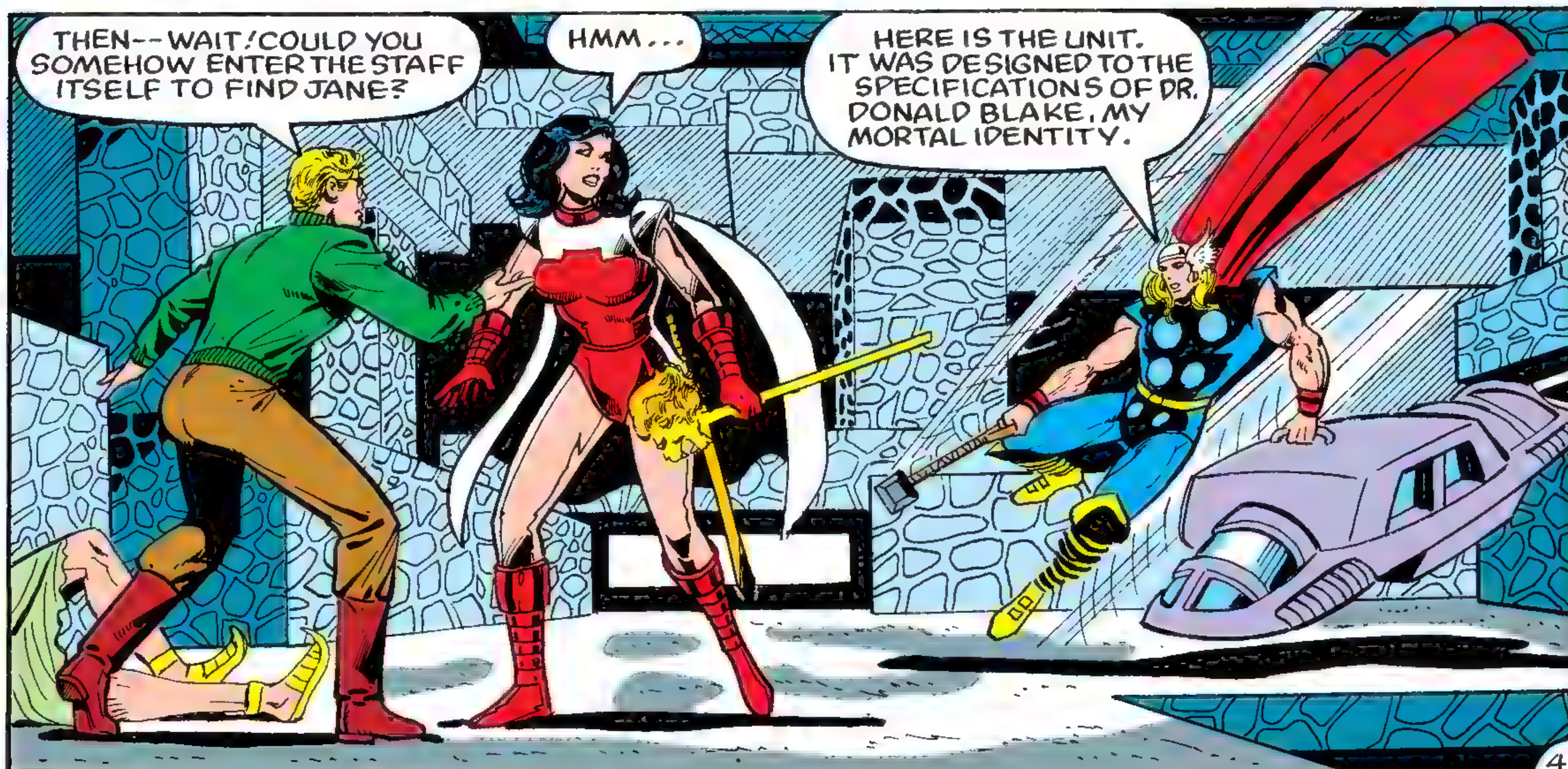
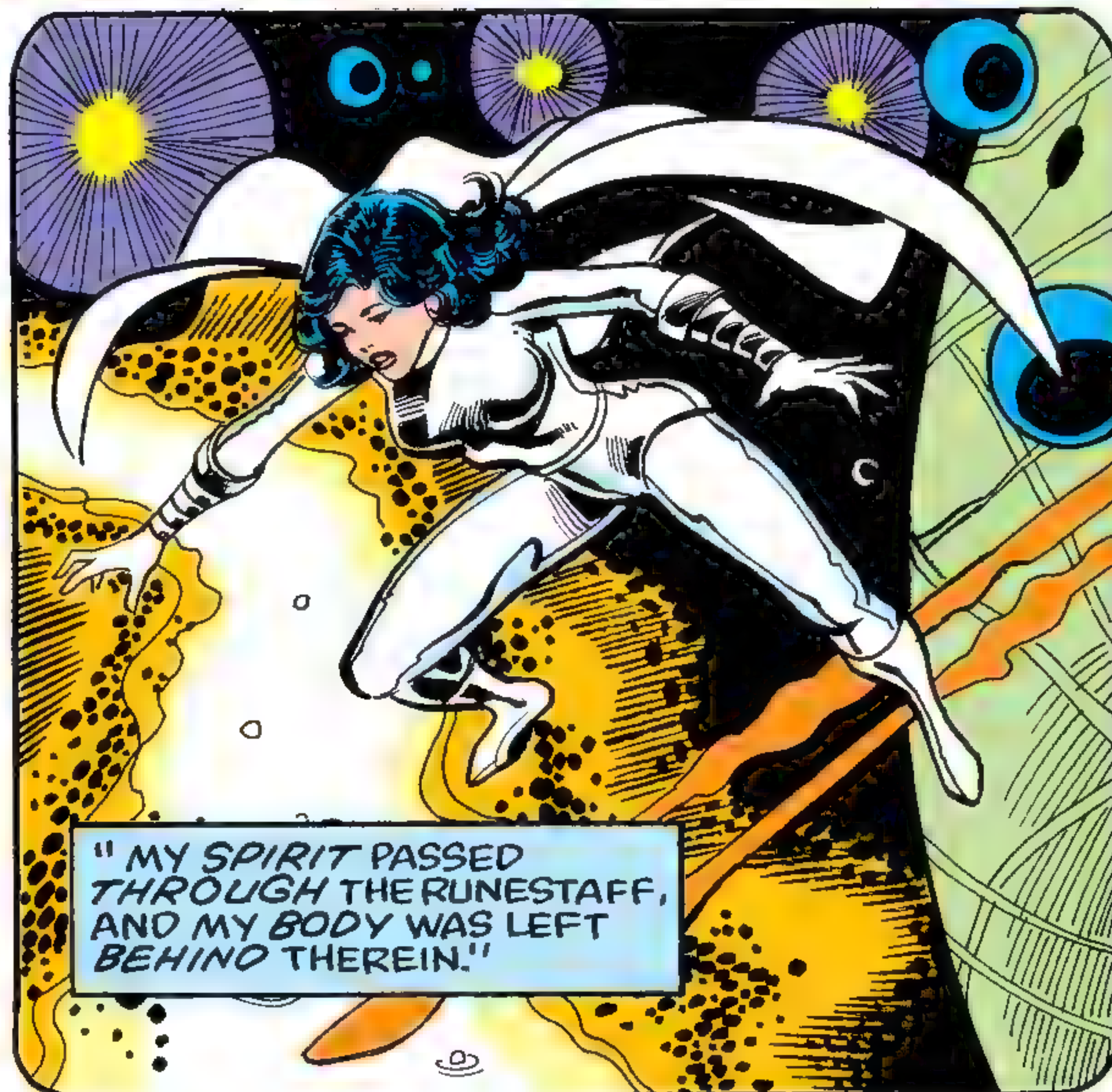
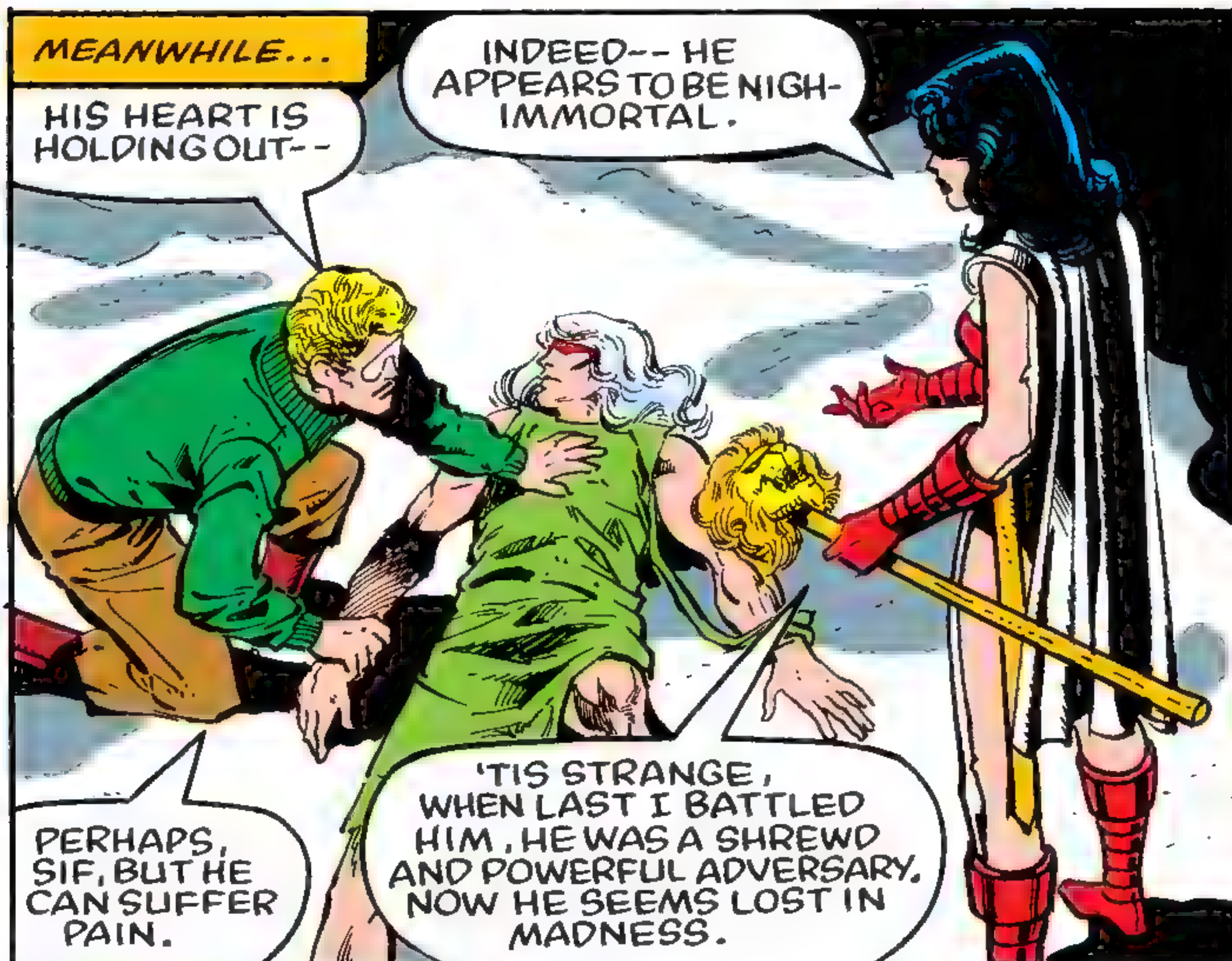
PERHAPS 'TIS TIME TO SIMPLY ABANDON THE EARTHLY GUISE OF DONALD BLAKE AND FORSAKE THIS QUEST.

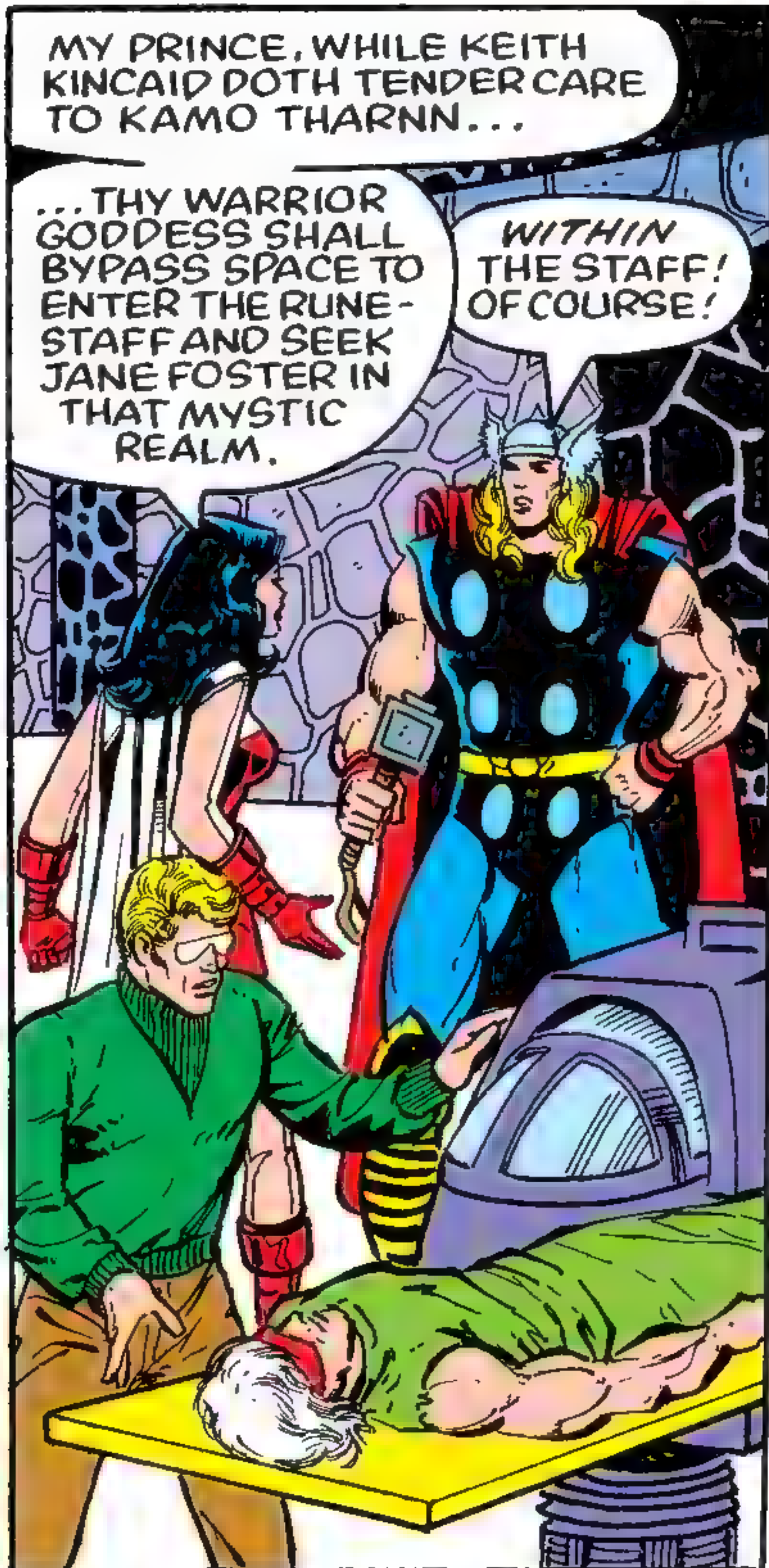
BUT NO-- TWO MORTAL LIVES ARE AT STAKE-- THE LOST JANE FOSTER AND HER BETROTHED KEITH KINCAID WHO DESPERATELY WOULD FIND HER.

AND IN TRUTH, I WOULD FIND JANE TOO, SHE WHOSE LOVE WAS ONCE MINE. FOR TOO LONG I HAVE IGNORED POOR JANE'S PLIGHT. I AM SHAMED THAT IT HAS TAKEN CRIMINAL CHARGES LEVELLED AGAINST ME* TO MAKE ME TAKE NOTICE.



* THOR # 332.





MY PRINCE, WHILE KEITH KINCAID DOETH TENDER CARE TO KAMO THARNN...

...THY WARRIOR GODDESS SHALL BYPASS SPACE TO ENTER THE RUNE-STAFF AND SEEK JANE FOSTER IN THAT MYSTIC REALM.

WITHIN THE STAFF! OF COURSE!



BUT NAY, BELOVED, ALL-FATHER ODIN ALONE KNOWS WHAT PERILS MAY LURK WITHIN.

DID YOU NOT ONCE ALREADY SAVE JANE FOSTER'S LIFE, INFUSING HER FORM WITH YOUR SPIRIT? NOW I SHALL ASSAY HER RESCUE.

THEN WE GO TOGETHER, FOR SUCH IS MY WILL.



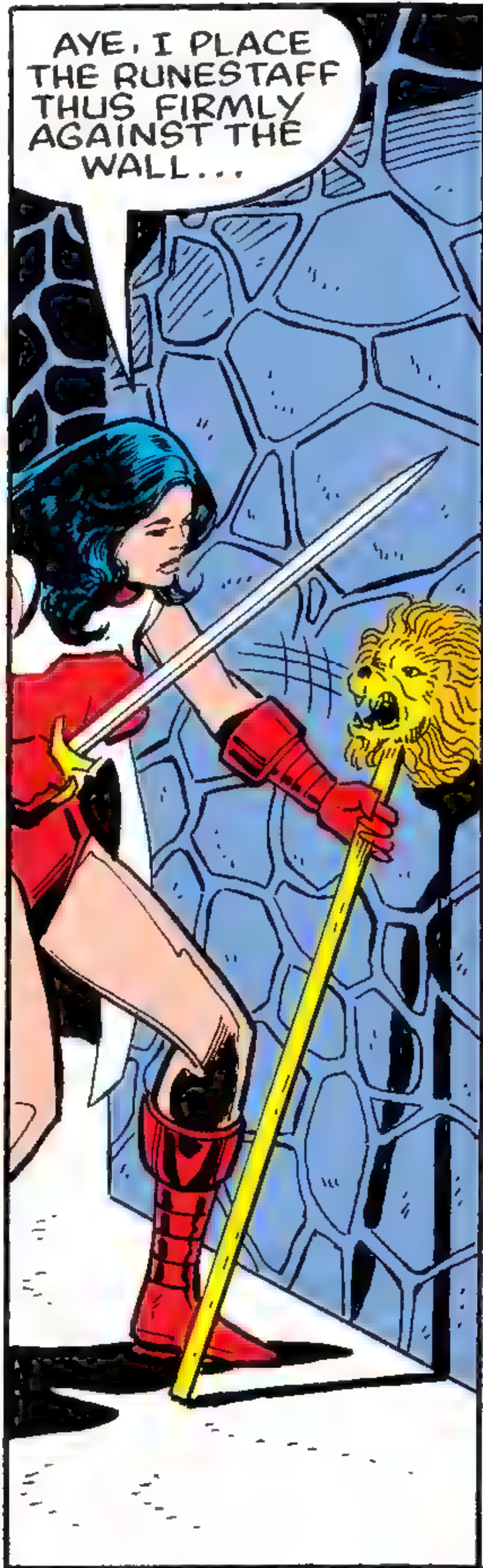
BUT WHAT OF KEITH KINCAID? MAY WE LEAVE A LONE MORTAL UNGUARDED?

KAMO THARNN NEEDS THE MEDICAL ATTENTION, THUNDER GOD.

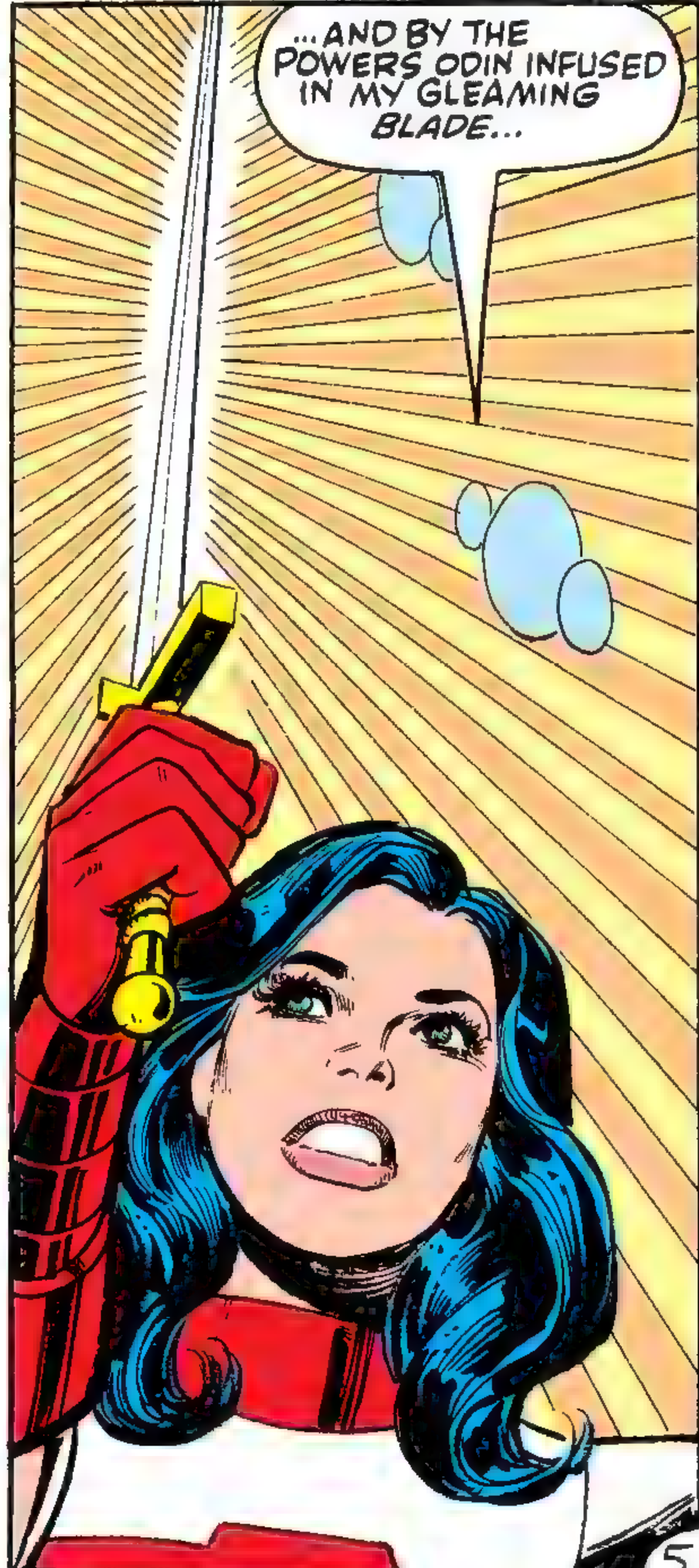


THE PLACE SEEMS PRETTY DESERTED, BUT, JUST IN CASE, THIS LASER-GUN I BORROWED FROM THE QUINJET OUGHT TO BE PROTECTION ENOUGH.

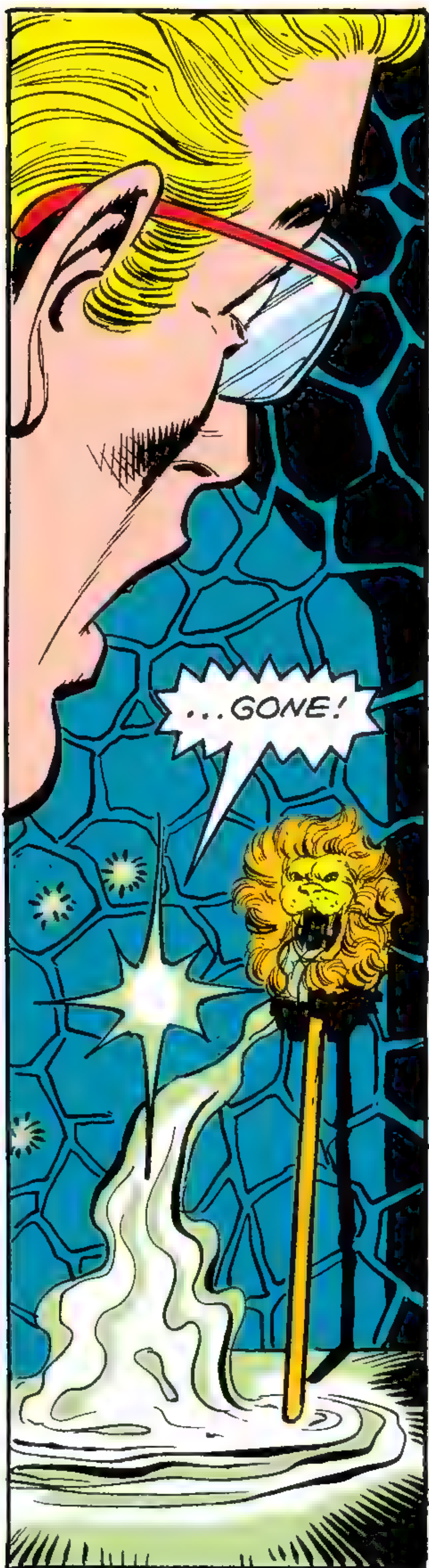
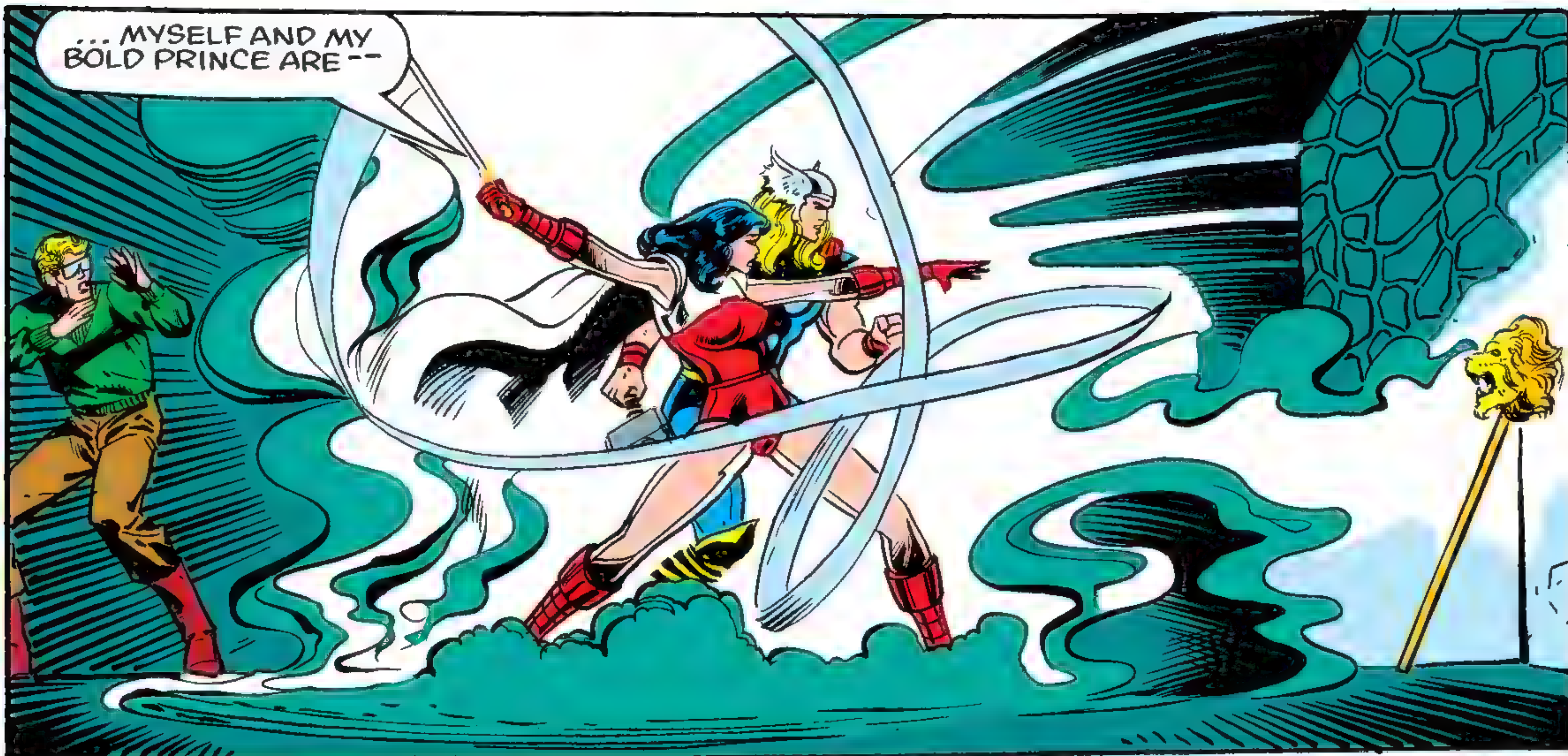
PLEASE... JUST FIND JANE FOR ME.

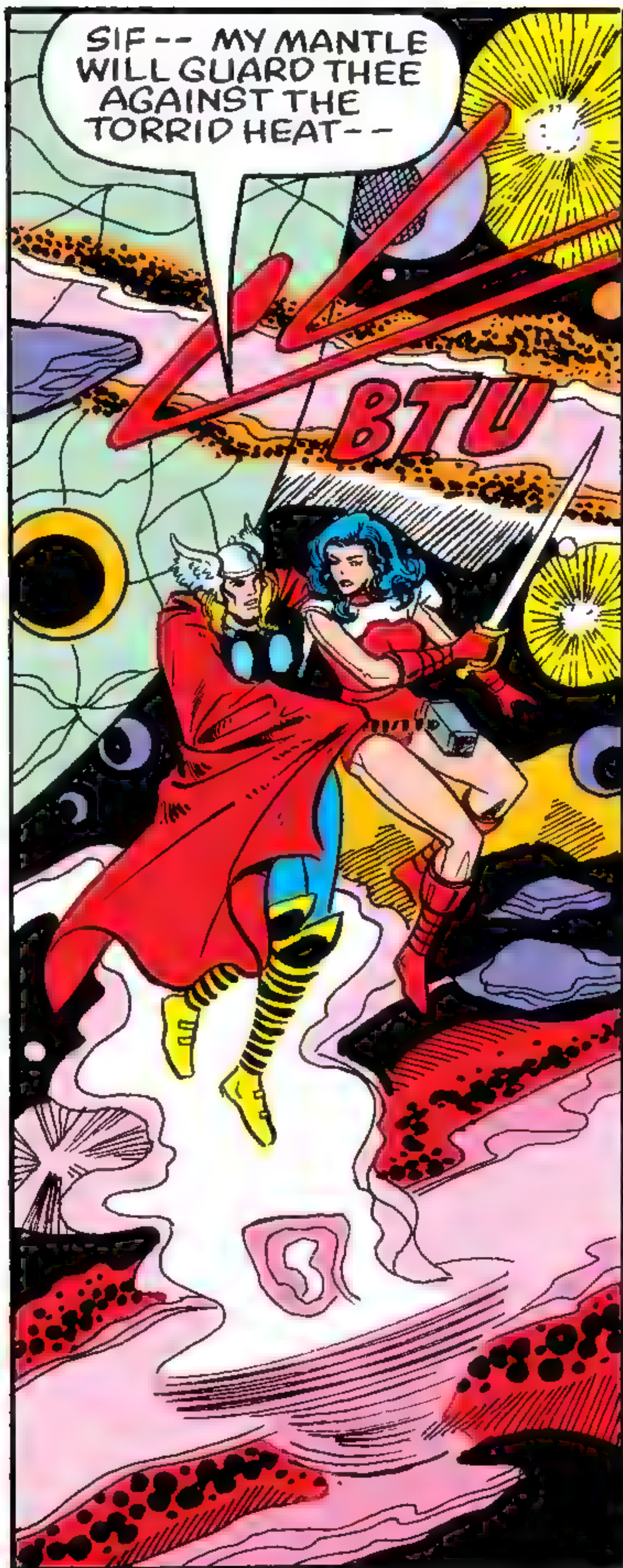


AYE, I PLACE THE RUNESTAFF THUS FIRMLY AGAINST THE WALL...



...AND BY THE POWERS ODIN INFUSED IN MY GLEAMING BLADE...





AT THAT MOMENT, UNAWARE OF THE FLIGHT OF HIS GODLY COMPANIONS...

YOUR CONDITION'S GOT ME WORRIED, MISTER THARNN. YOUR VITAL SIGNS SEEM STABILIZED BUT YOU'RE DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO SLIPPING INTO A COMA.

AND FOR AN IMMORTAL THAT COULD LAST FOR EONS.

I'D BETTER JUST MONITOR THE EEG--

CHRISTMAS IN JULY! THE MACHINE'S RECORDING MULTIPLE BRAINWAVES.

HOW'S THAT POSSIBLE? THERE'D HAVE TO BE A HUNDRED OR MORE INDIVIDUALS HOOKED UP TO--

WAIT! SEVERAL TIMES IN HIS DELIRIUM KAMO THARNN SAID HE WAS NOT KAMO THARNN.

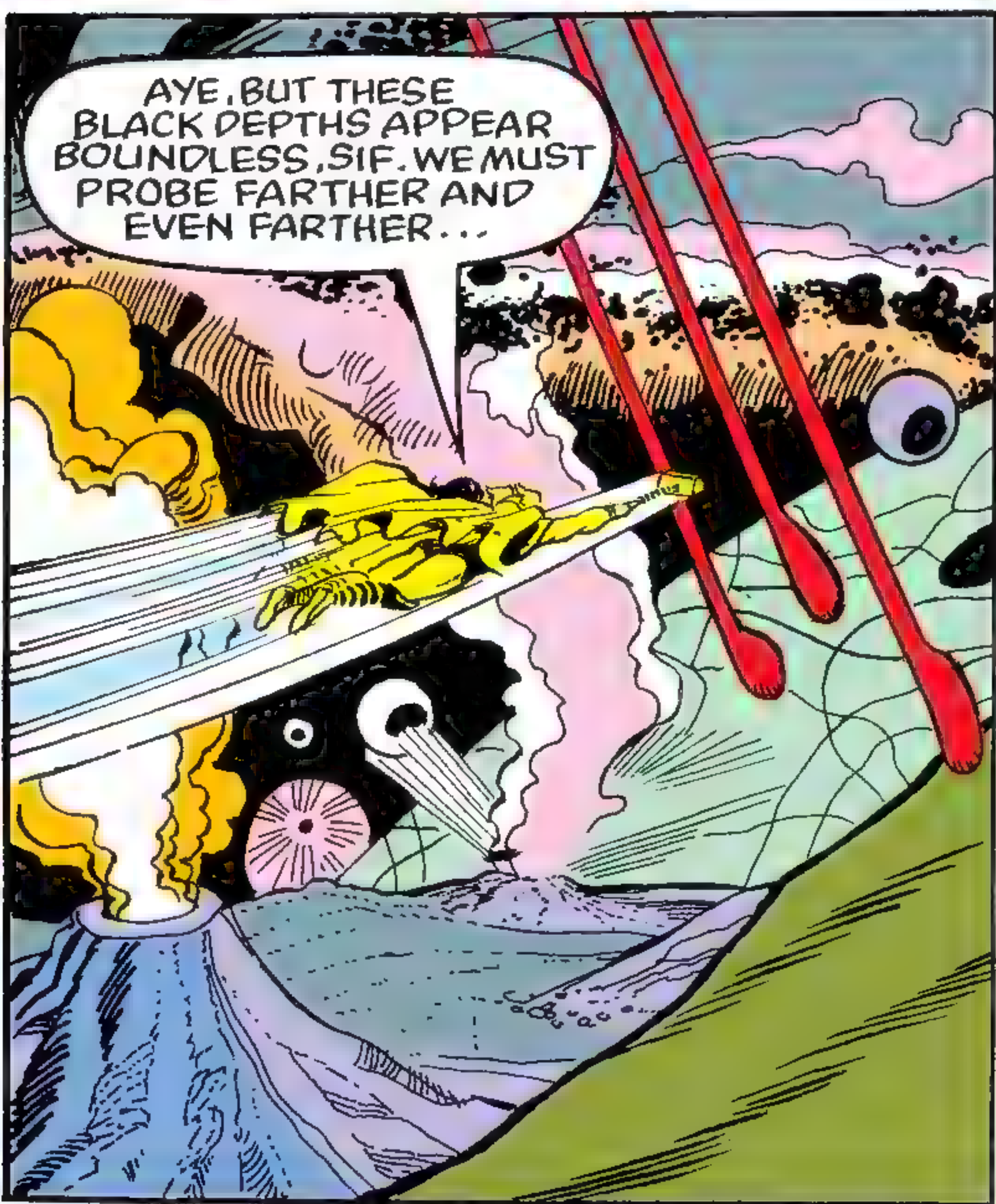
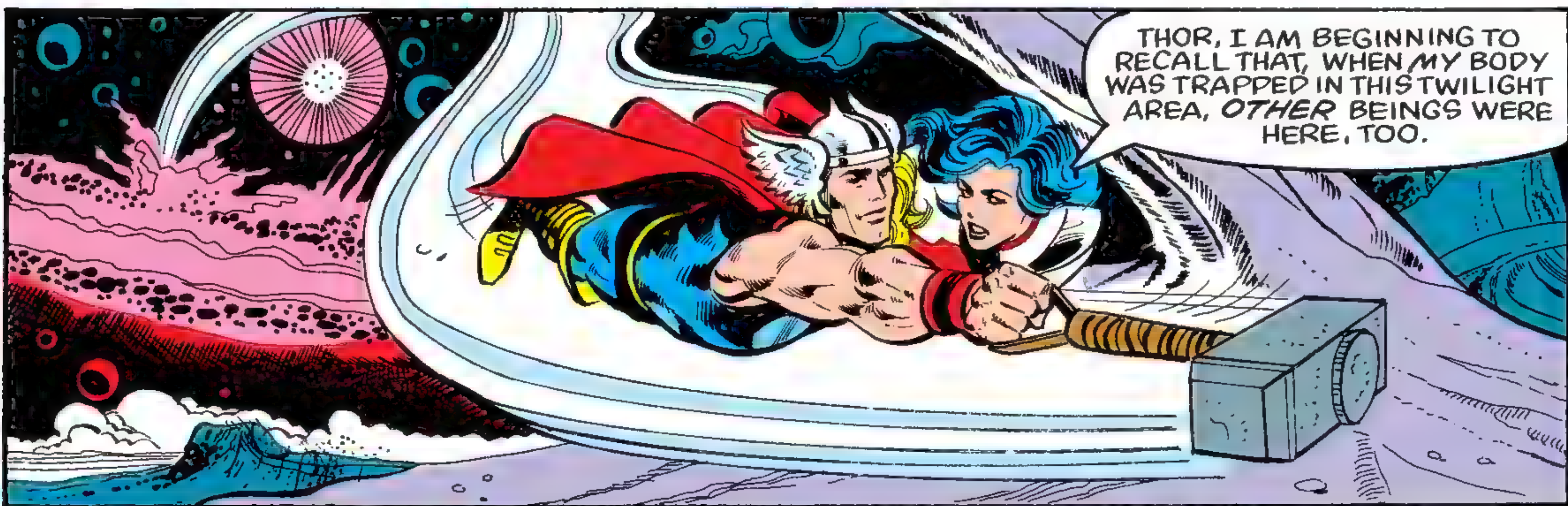
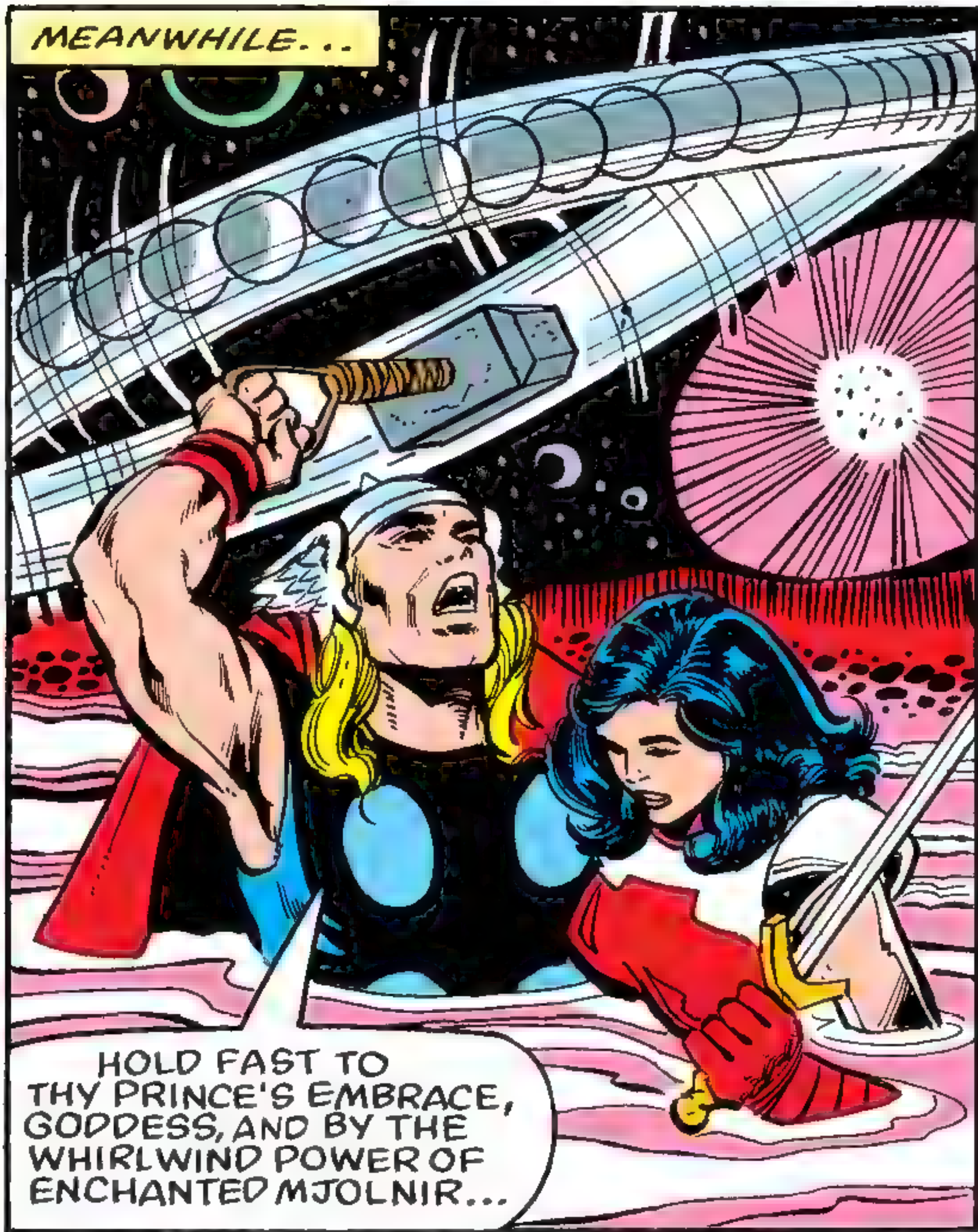
THEY'D LAUGH ME OUT OF THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION FOR THIS, BUT I'M ALREADY KNEE-DEEP IN MYSTICISM AND MAGIC HERE...

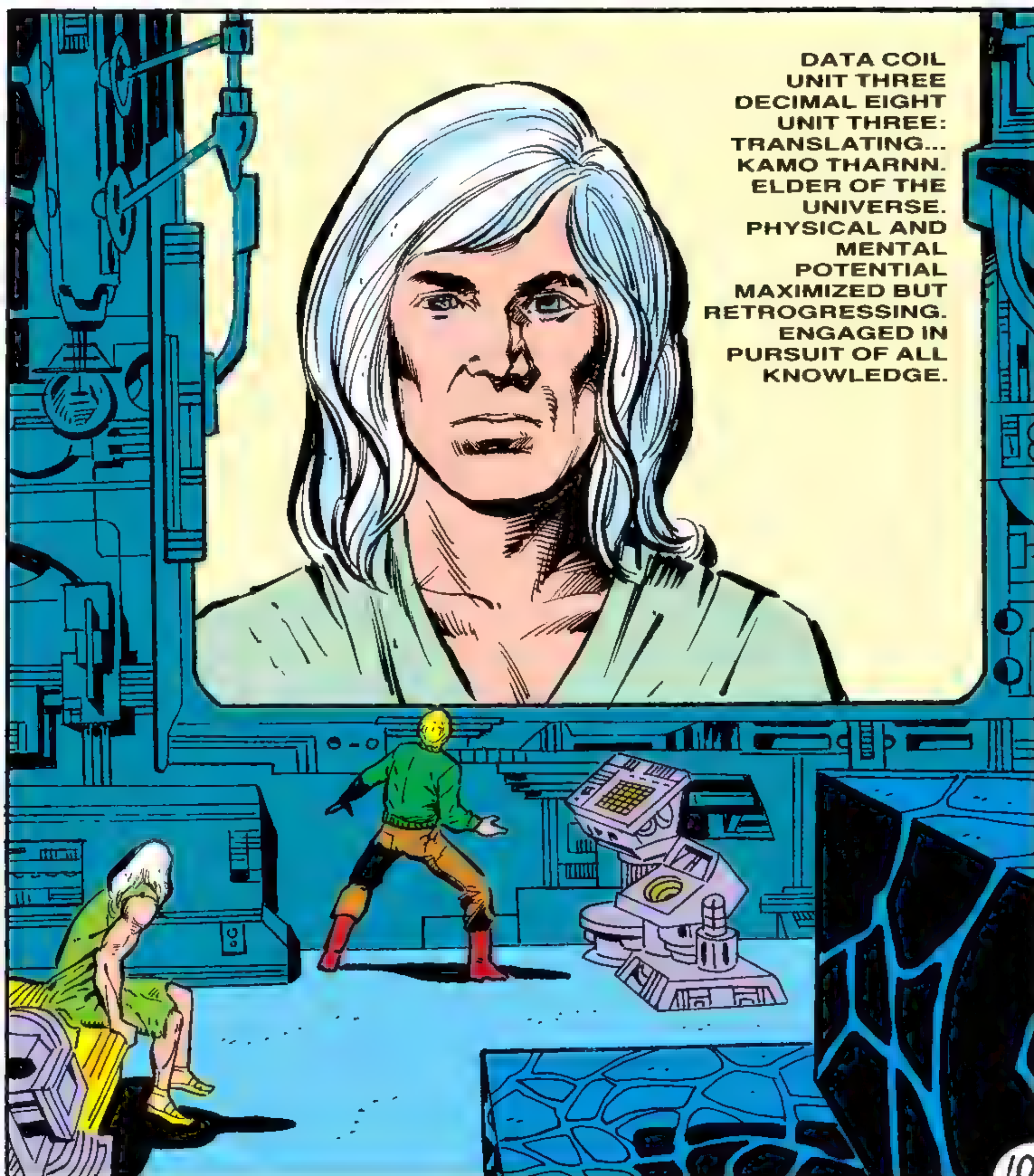
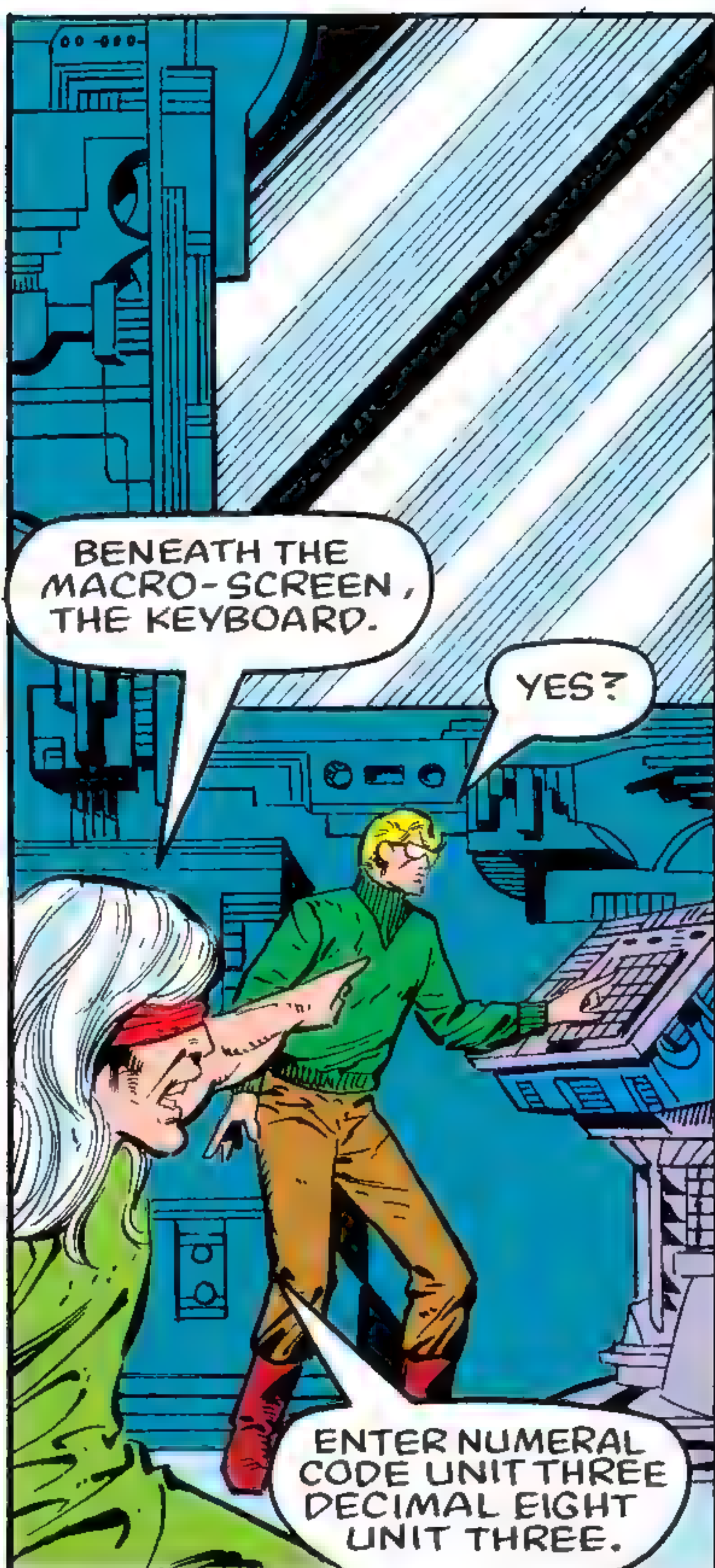
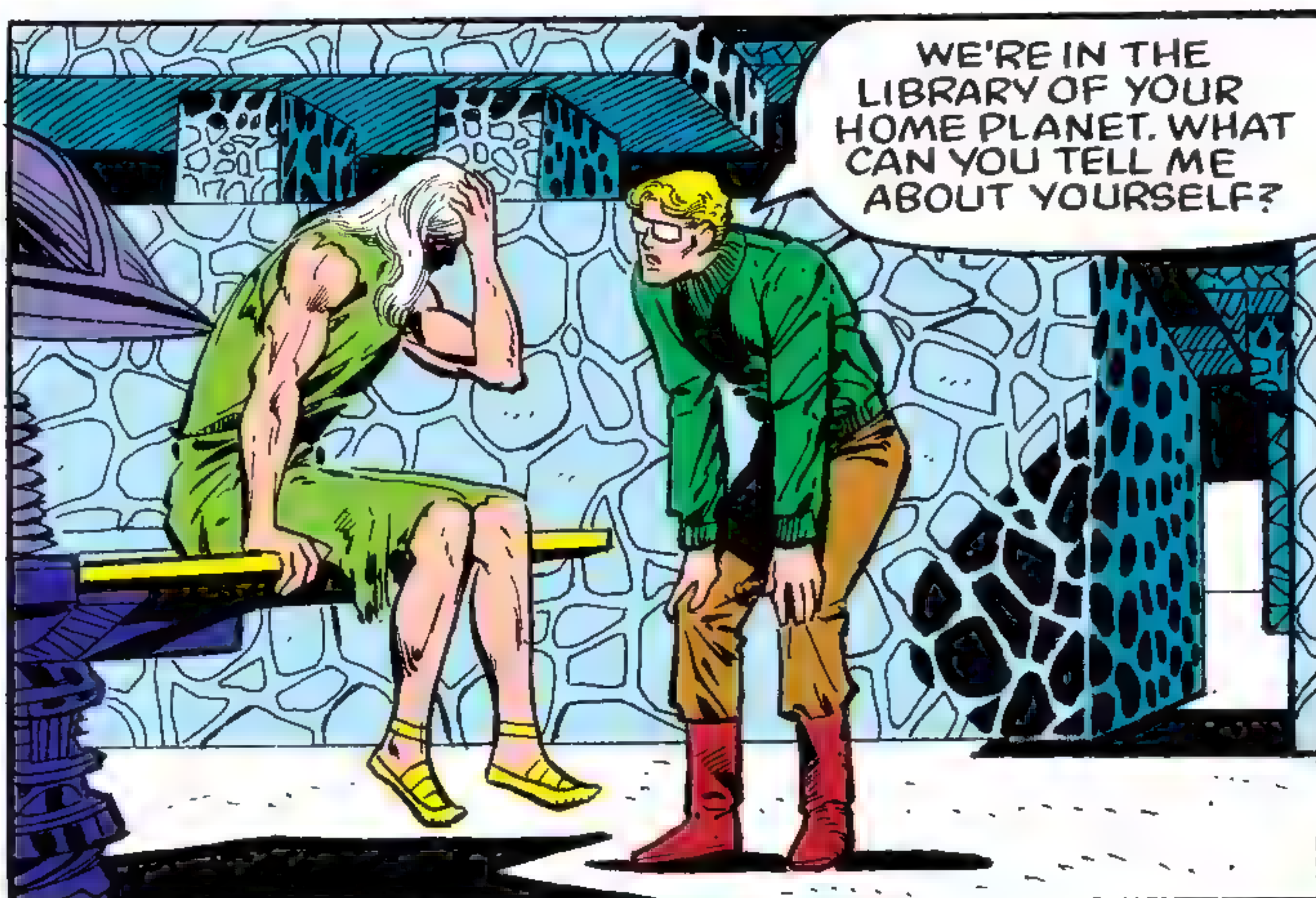
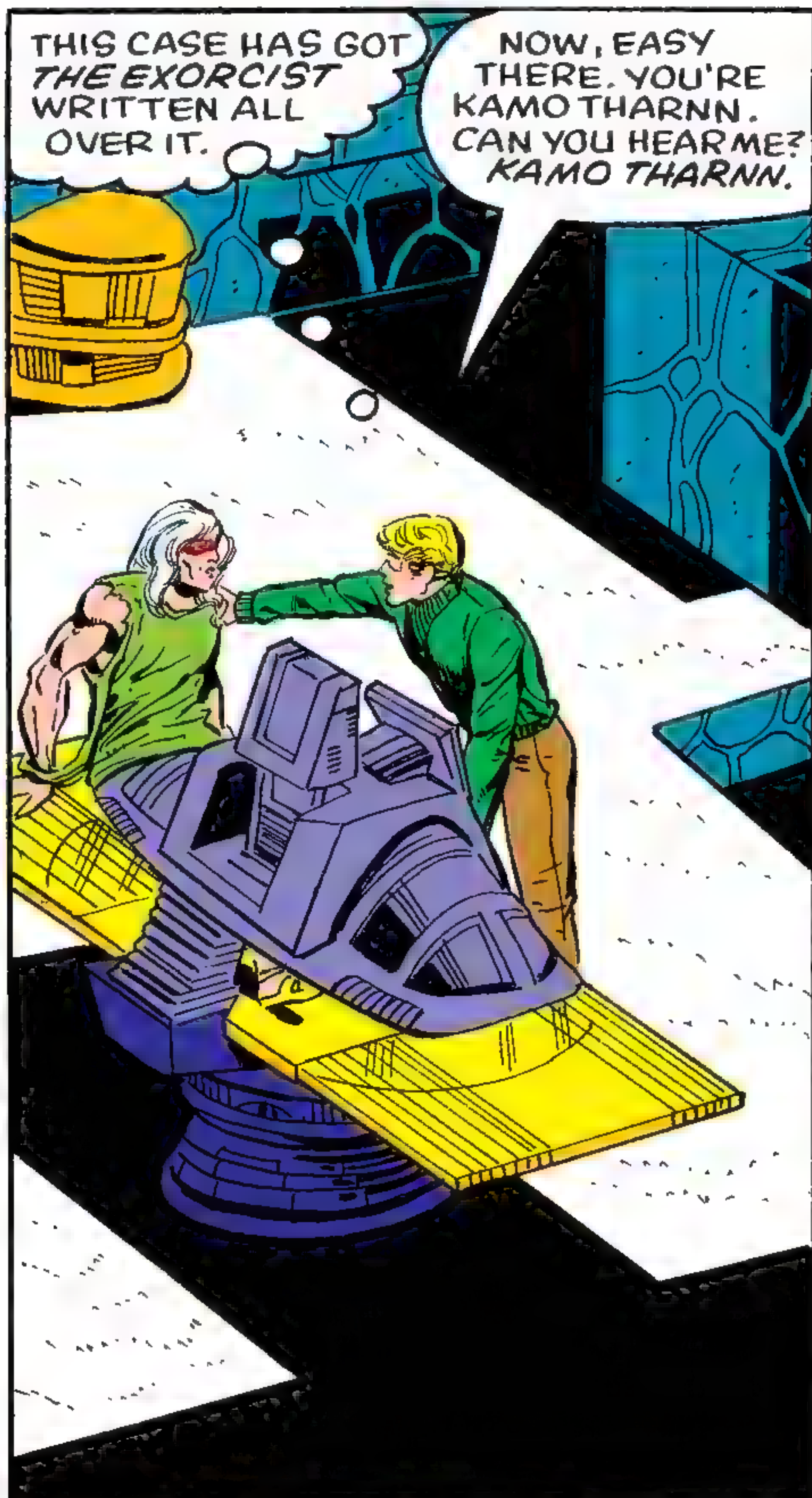
...AND I'VE GOT AN OFF-THE-WALL HUNCH THIS BODY IS HOSTING MORE THAN ONE BEING.

WELL, WHOEVER SAID THE EYES ARE WINDOWS TO THE SOUL MAY NOT HAVE INTENDED TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY...

... BUT THIS IS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A FANTASY WORLD!

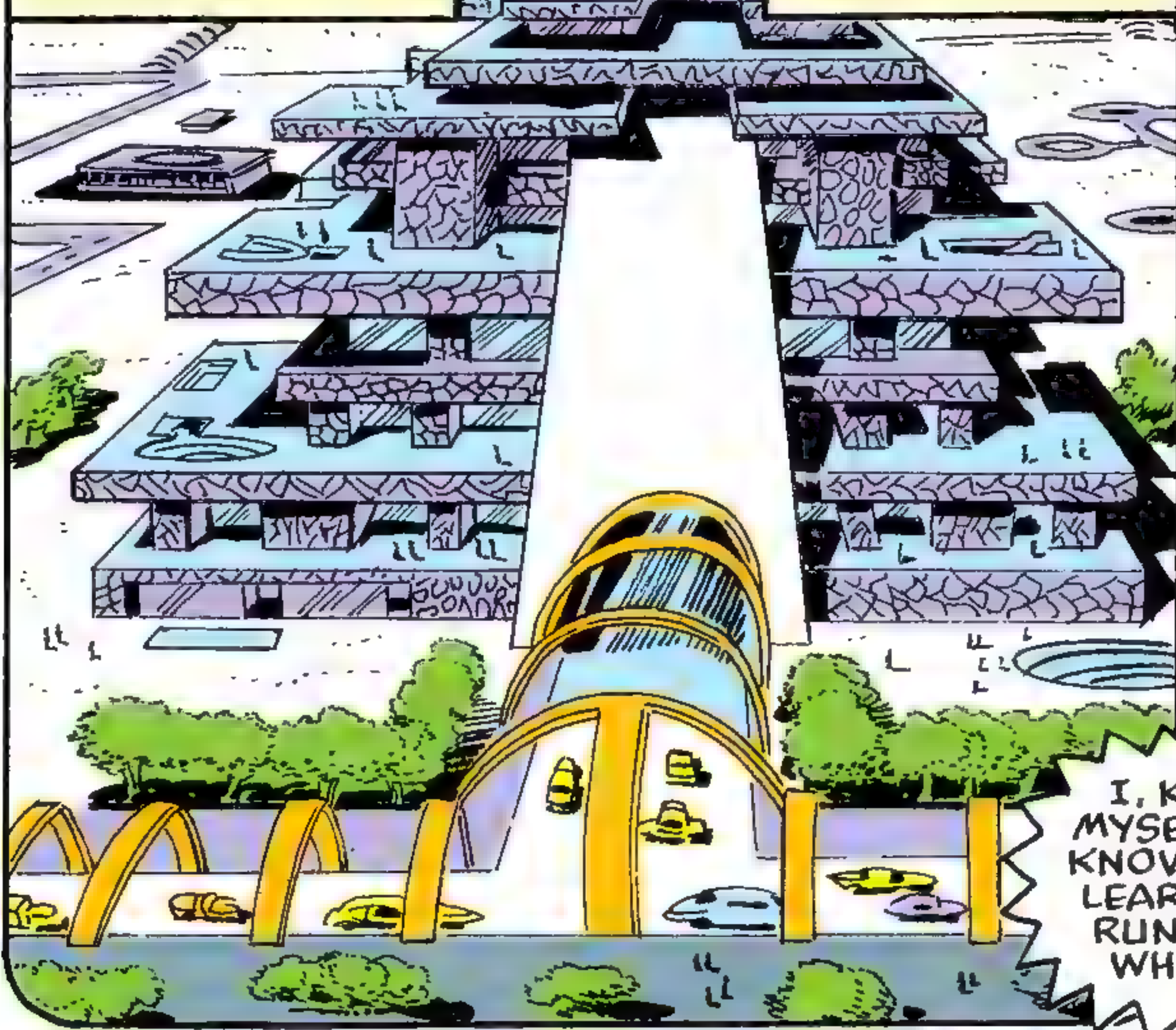
I'VE GOT TO REVIVE HIM!





HIS ADOPTED
PLANET RUS LONG
SERVED AS AN INTER
STELLAR ACADEMY
WITHIN THE LOCAL
GALAXY.

MASTER LIBRARY
HOUSES MOST
COMPLETE BANK
OF DATA COILS
WITHIN THE
GALACTIC SYSTEM.

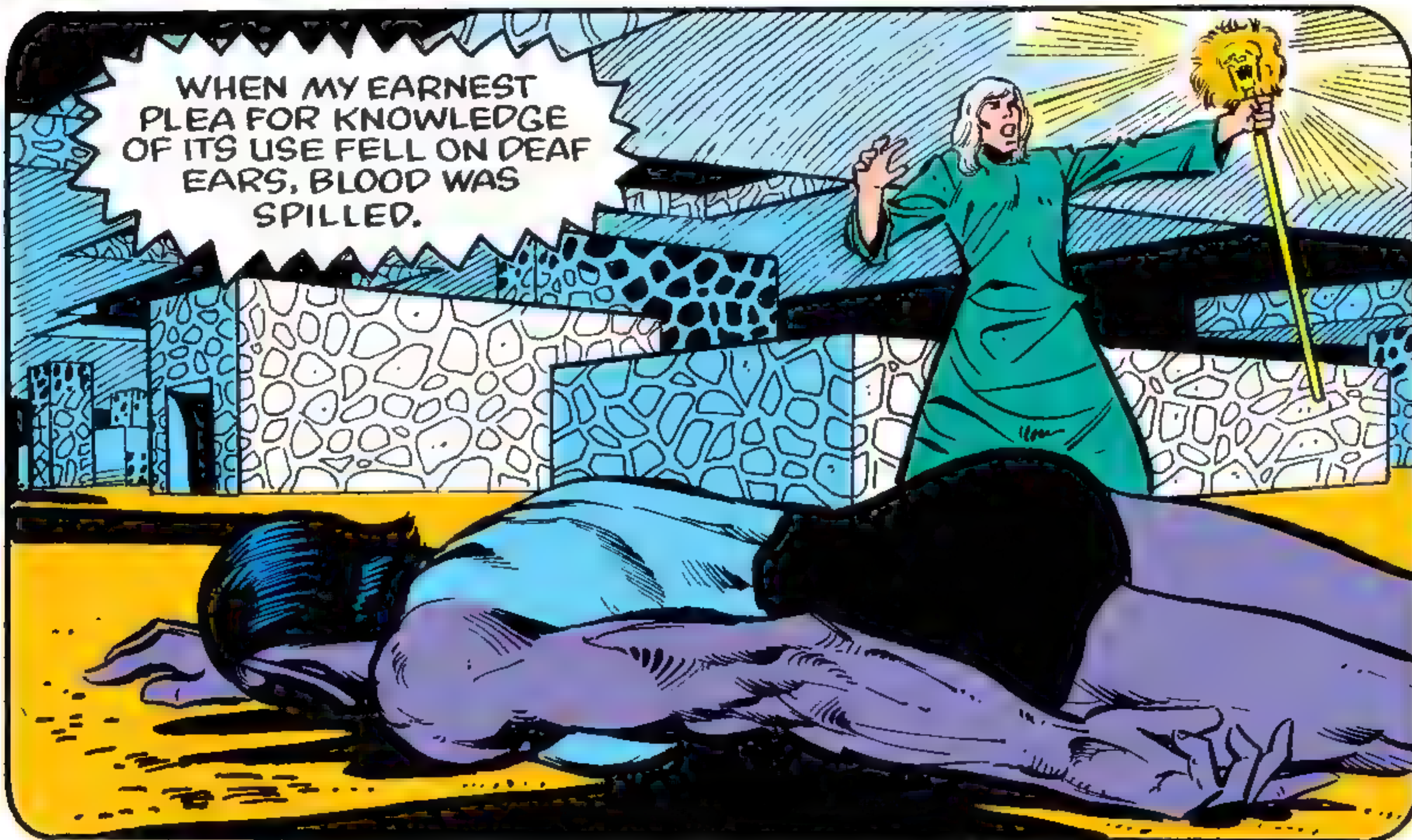


CONFIDENTIAL AUTOBIO CLEARANCE 3.8.3

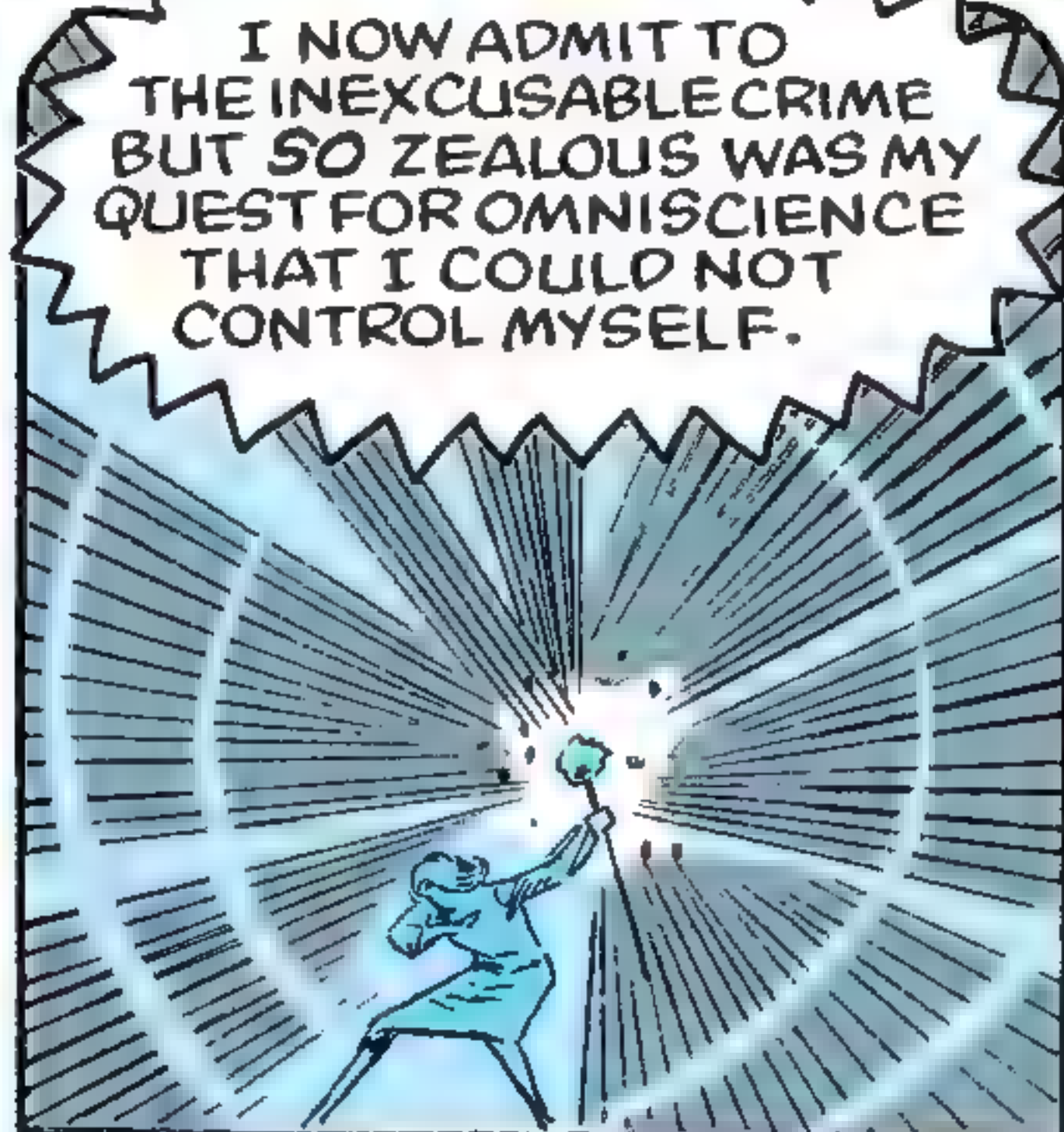


I, KAMO THARNN, SUPPOSING
MYSELF TO HAVE POSSESSED ALL
KNOWLEDGE, WAS ASTONISHED TO
LEARN OF AN ALIEN AND MYSTIC
RUNESTAFF, THE POWERS OF
WHICH LAY BEYOND MY GRASP.

WHEN MY EARNEST
PLEA FOR KNOWLEDGE
OF ITS USE FELL ON DEAF
EARS, BLOOD WAS
SPILLED.

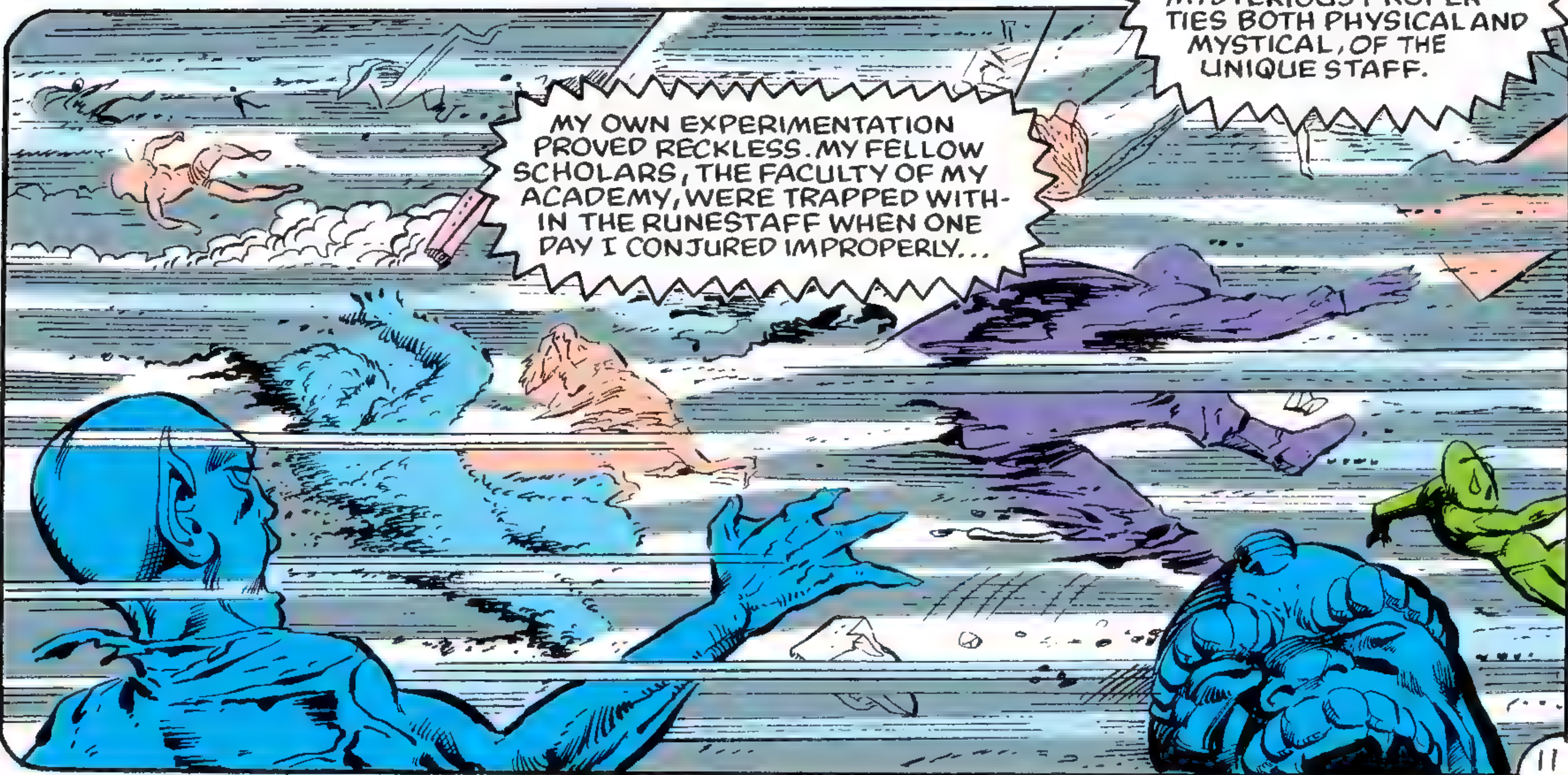


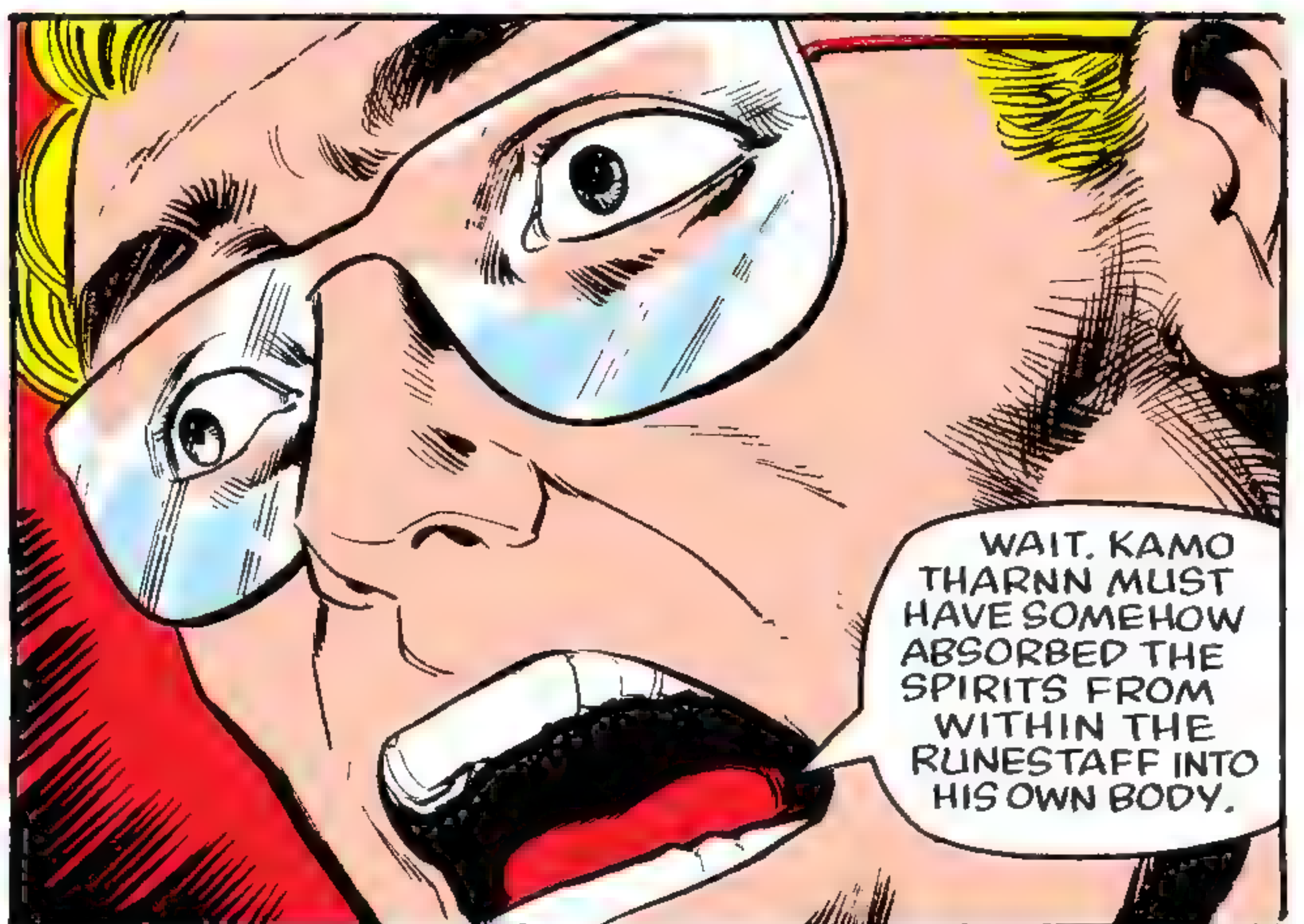
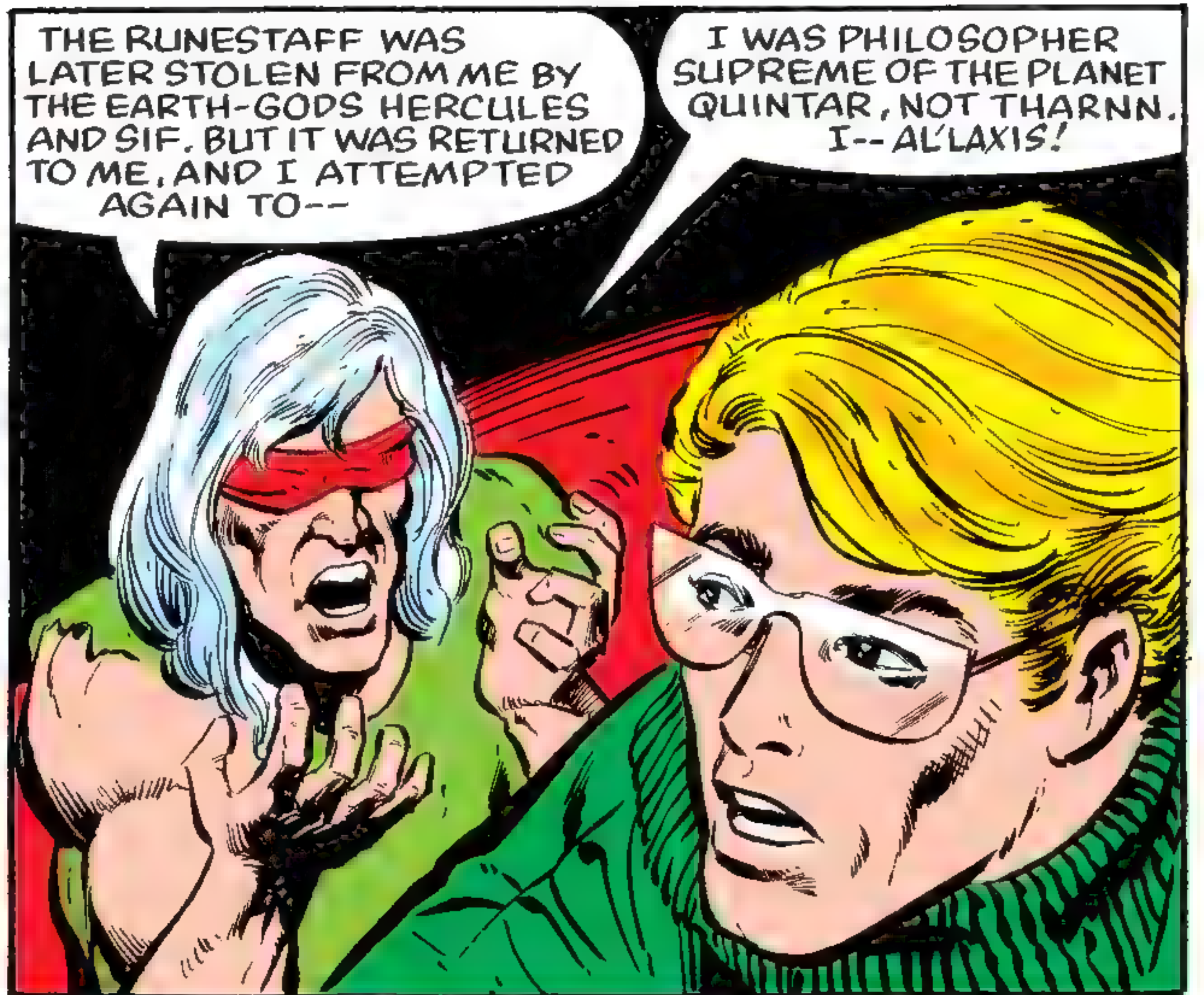
I NOW ADMIT TO
THE INEXCUSABLE CRIME
BUT SO ZEALOUS WAS MY
QUEST FOR OMNISCIENCE
THAT I COULD NOT
CONTROL MYSELF.

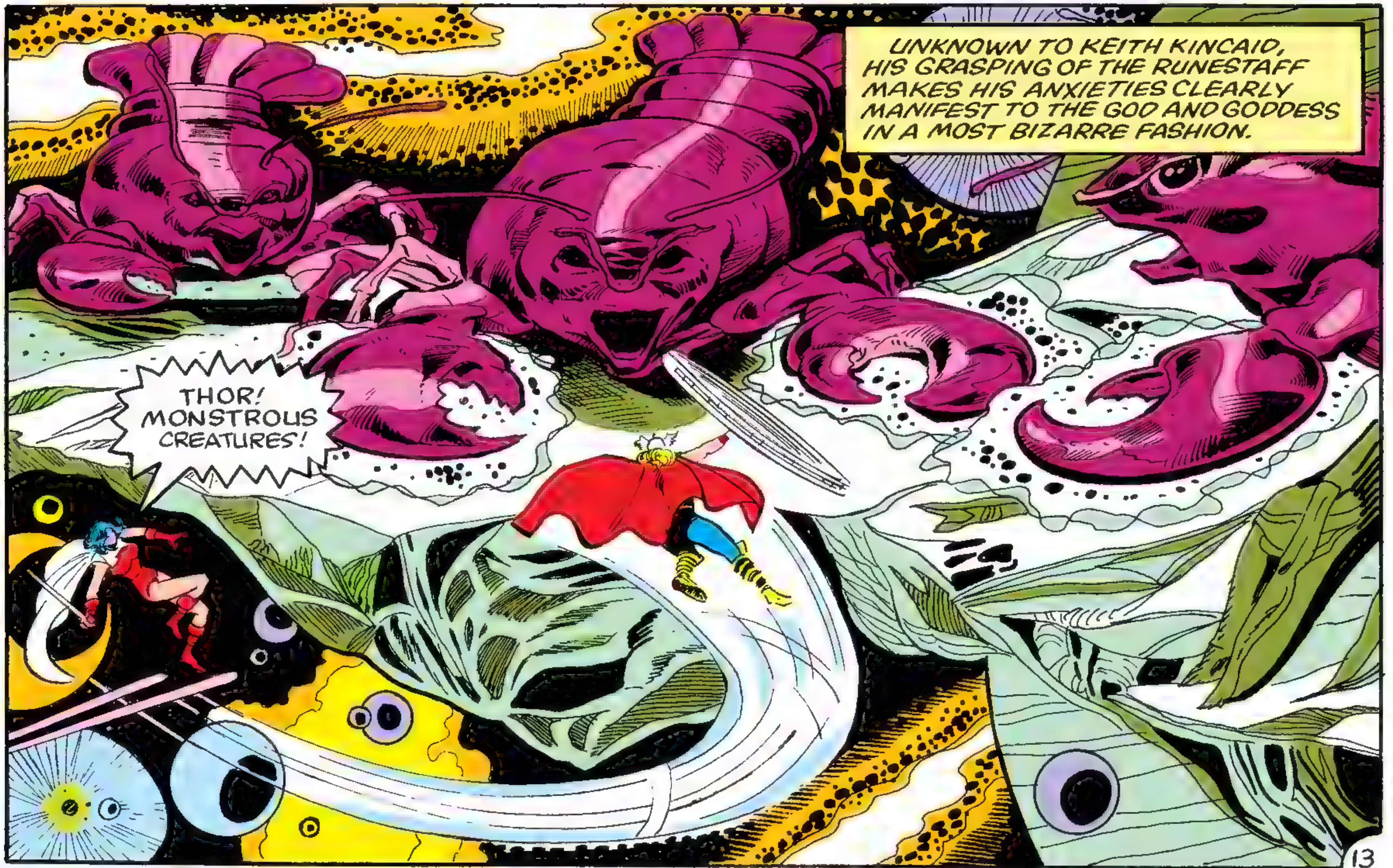
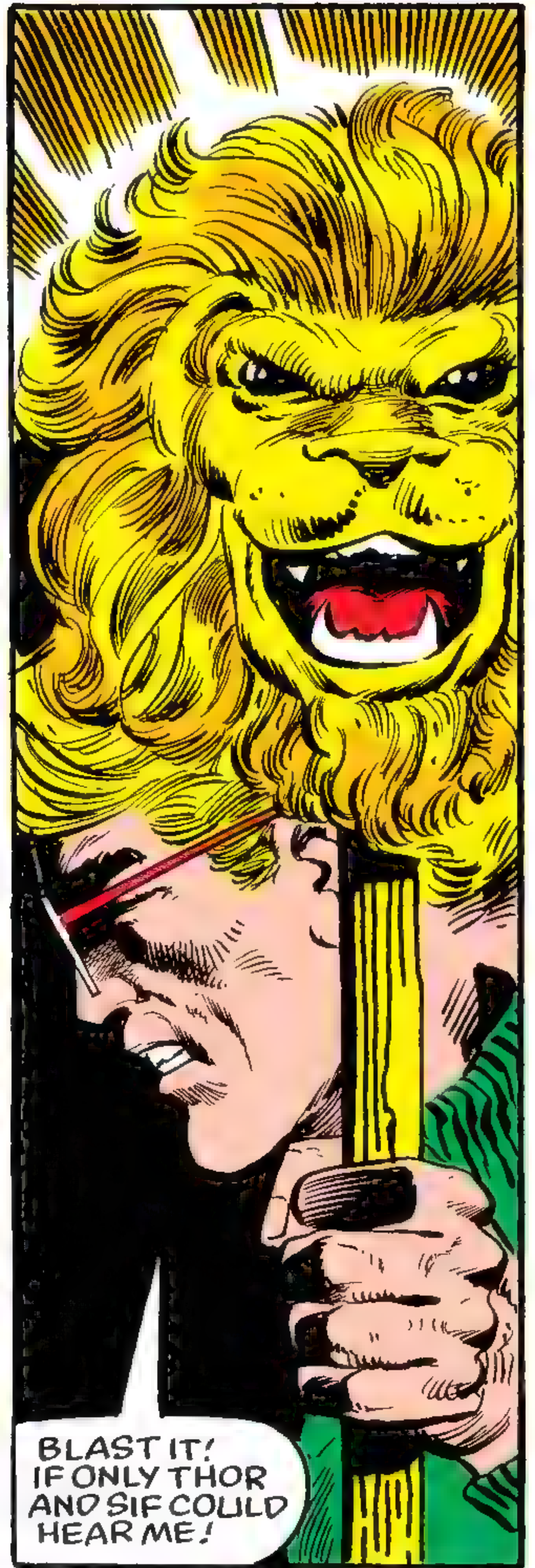
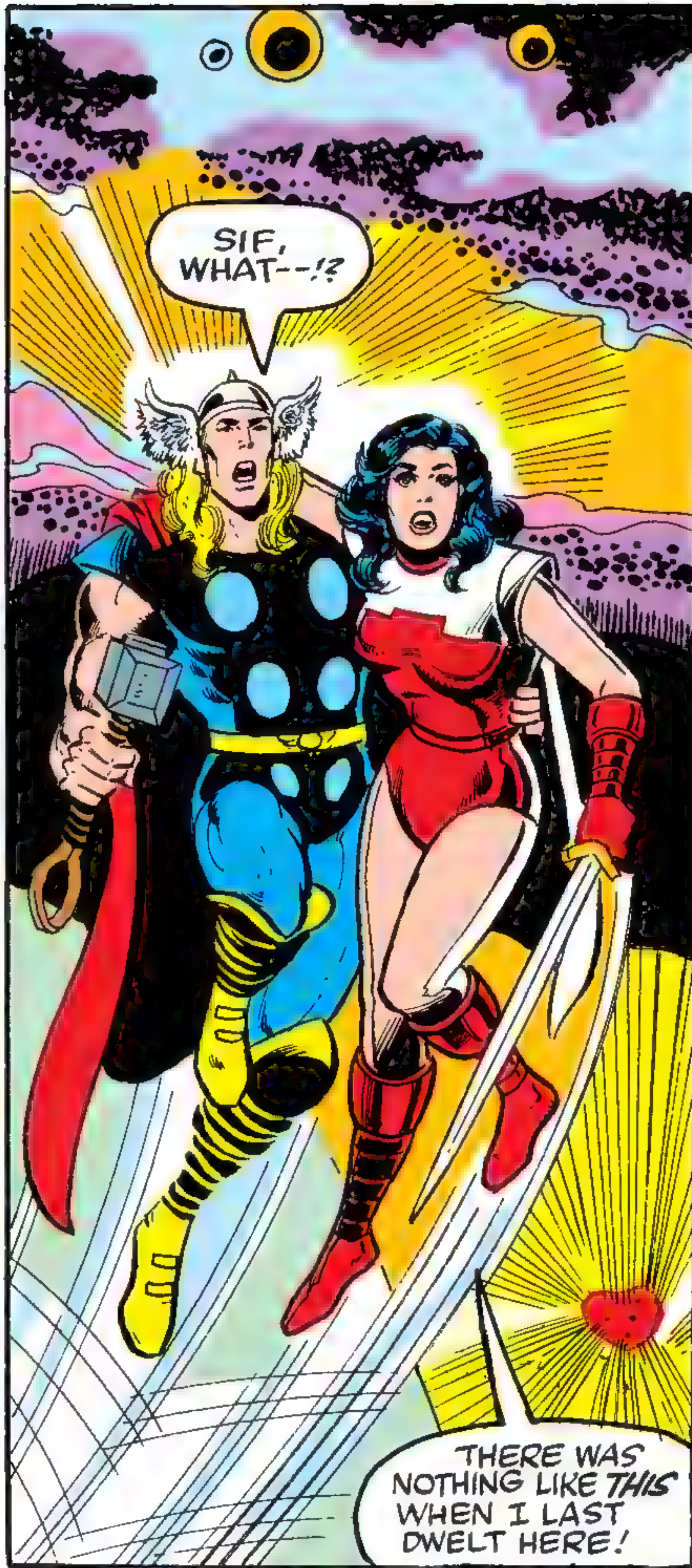


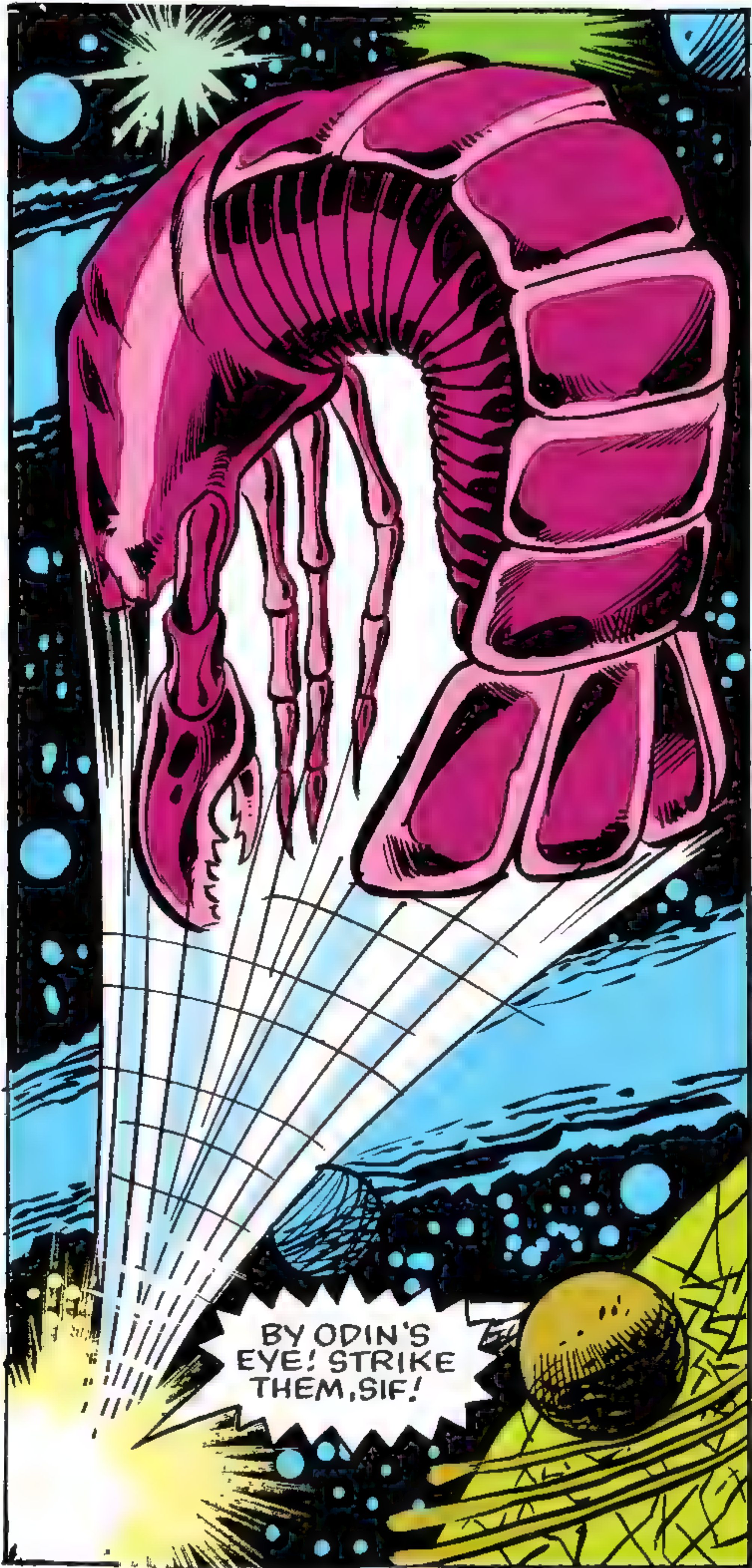
YET SIN FOLLOWED
UPON SIN. HAVING SLAIN
THE MASTER, I HAD NO
ONE TO EXPLAIN THE
MYSTERIOUS PROPER-
TIES BOTH PHYSICAL AND
MYSTICAL, OF THE
UNIQUE STAFF.

MY OWN EXPERIMENTATION
PROVED RECKLESS. MY FELLOW
SCHOLARS, THE FACULTY OF MY
ACADEMY, WERE TRAPPED WITH-
IN THE RUNESTAFF WHEN ONE
DAY I CONJURED IMPROPERLY...

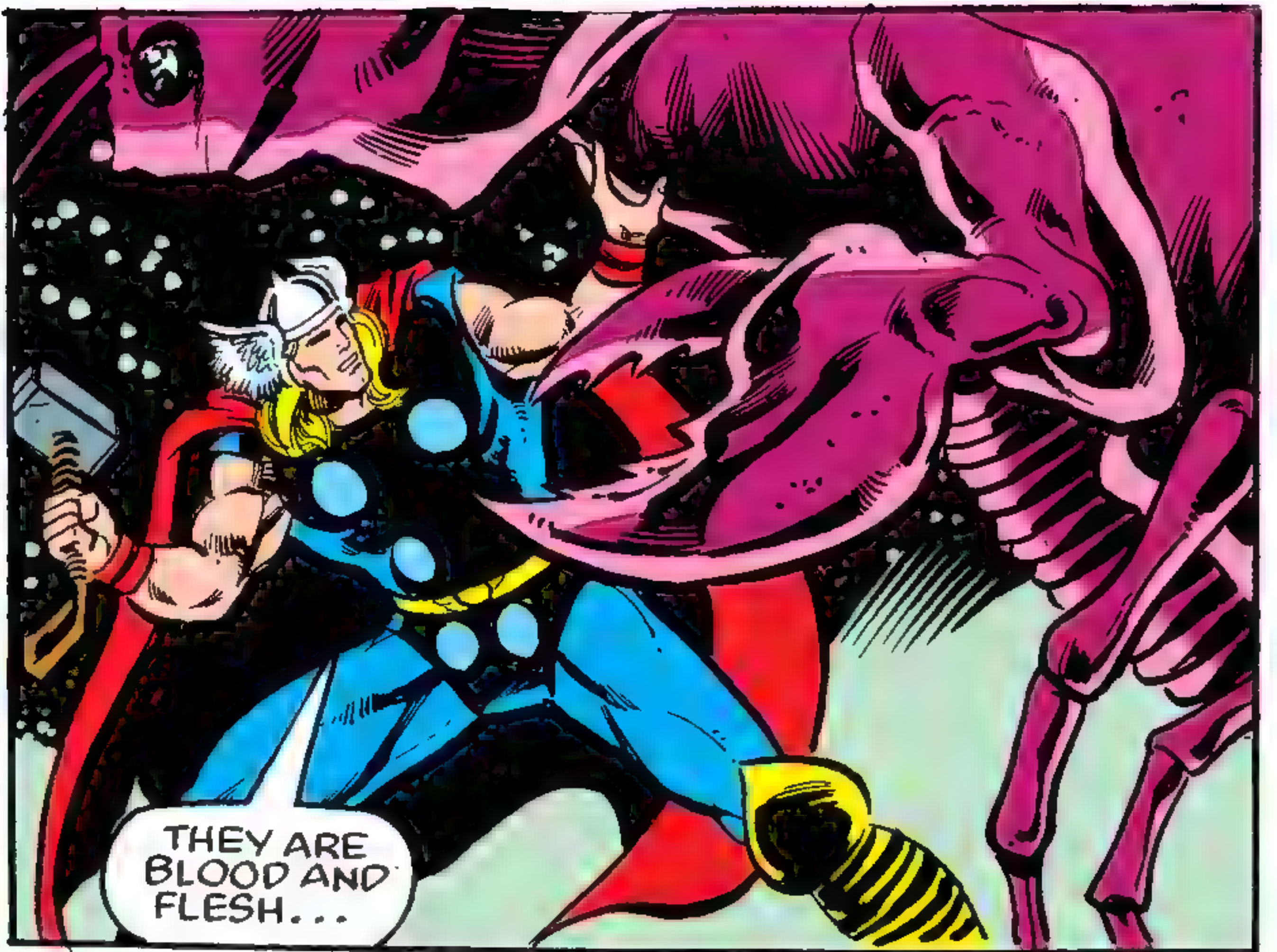




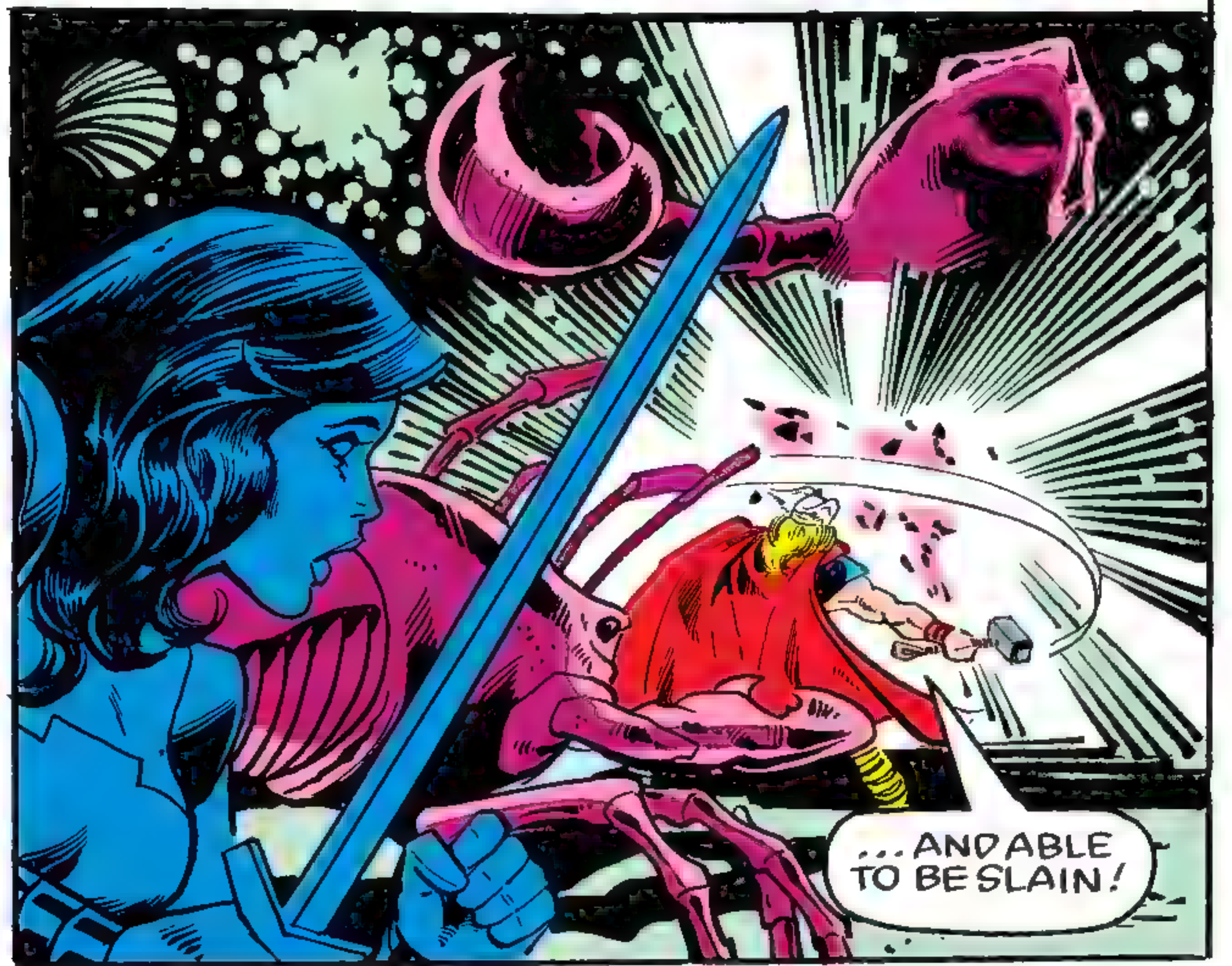




BY ODIN'S
EYE! STRIKE
THEM, SIF!



THEY ARE
BLOOD AND
FLESH...



...AND ABLE
TO BE SLAIN!

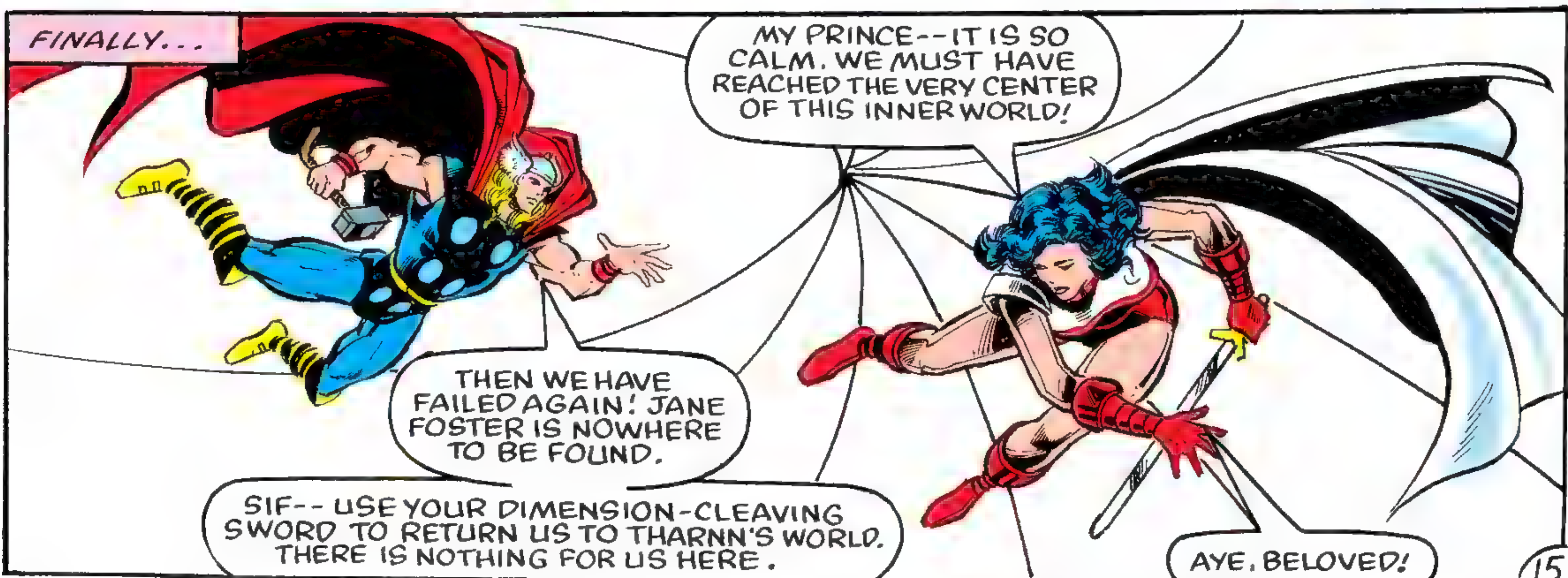
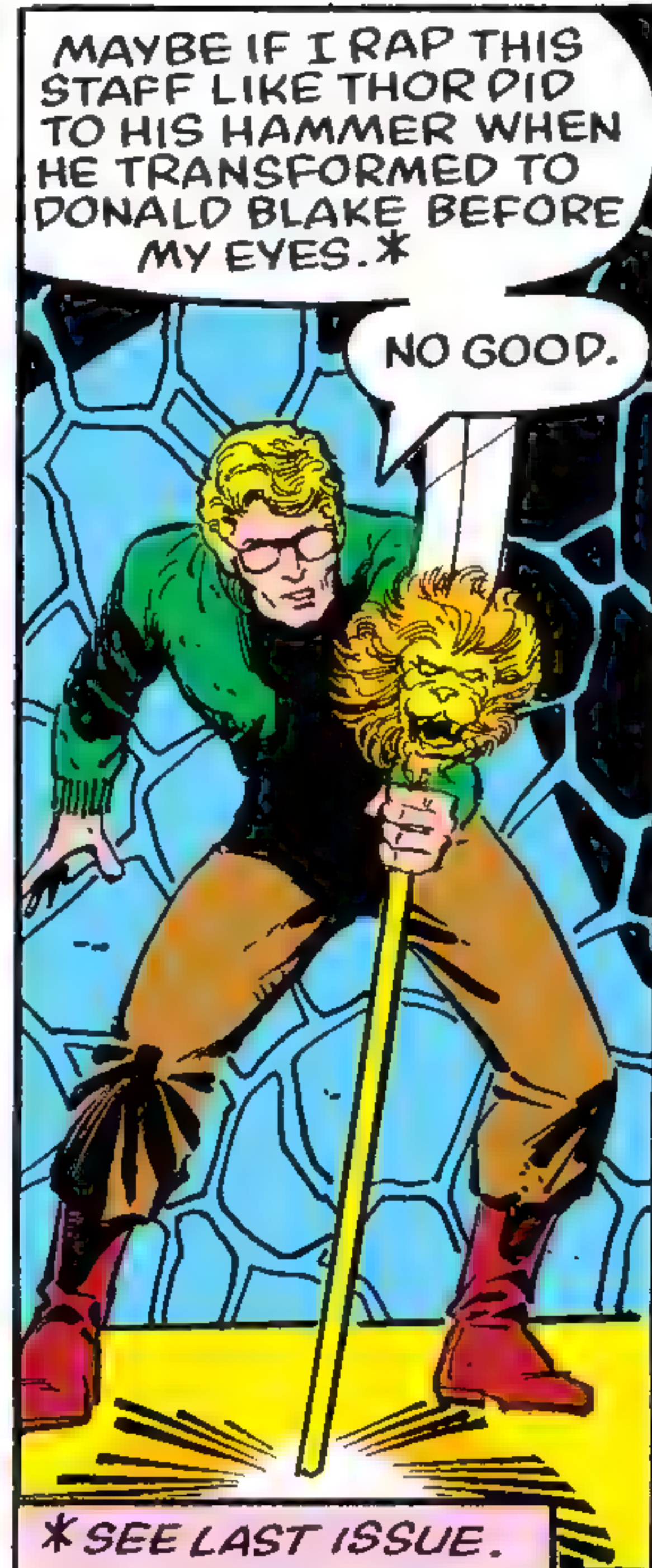
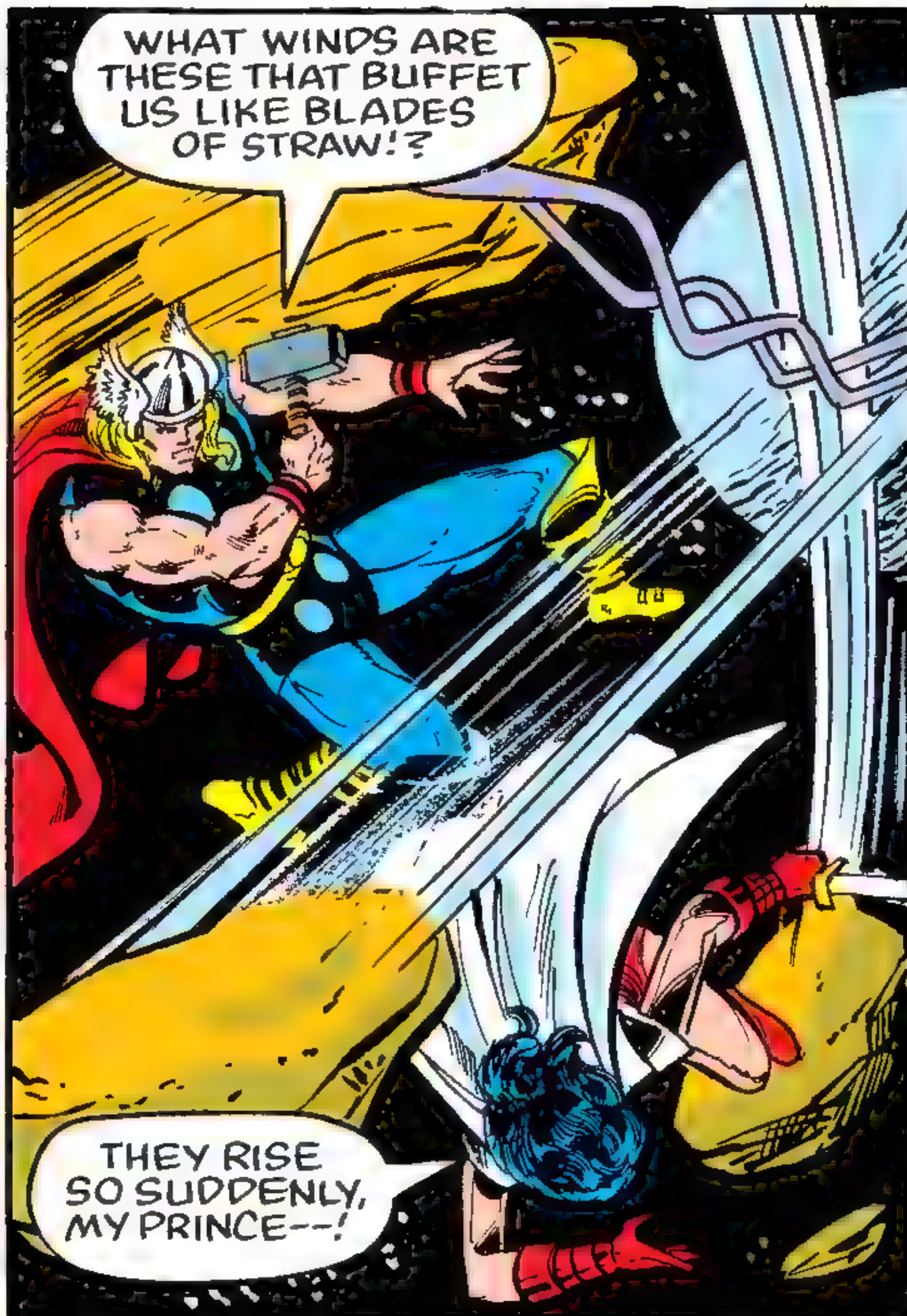
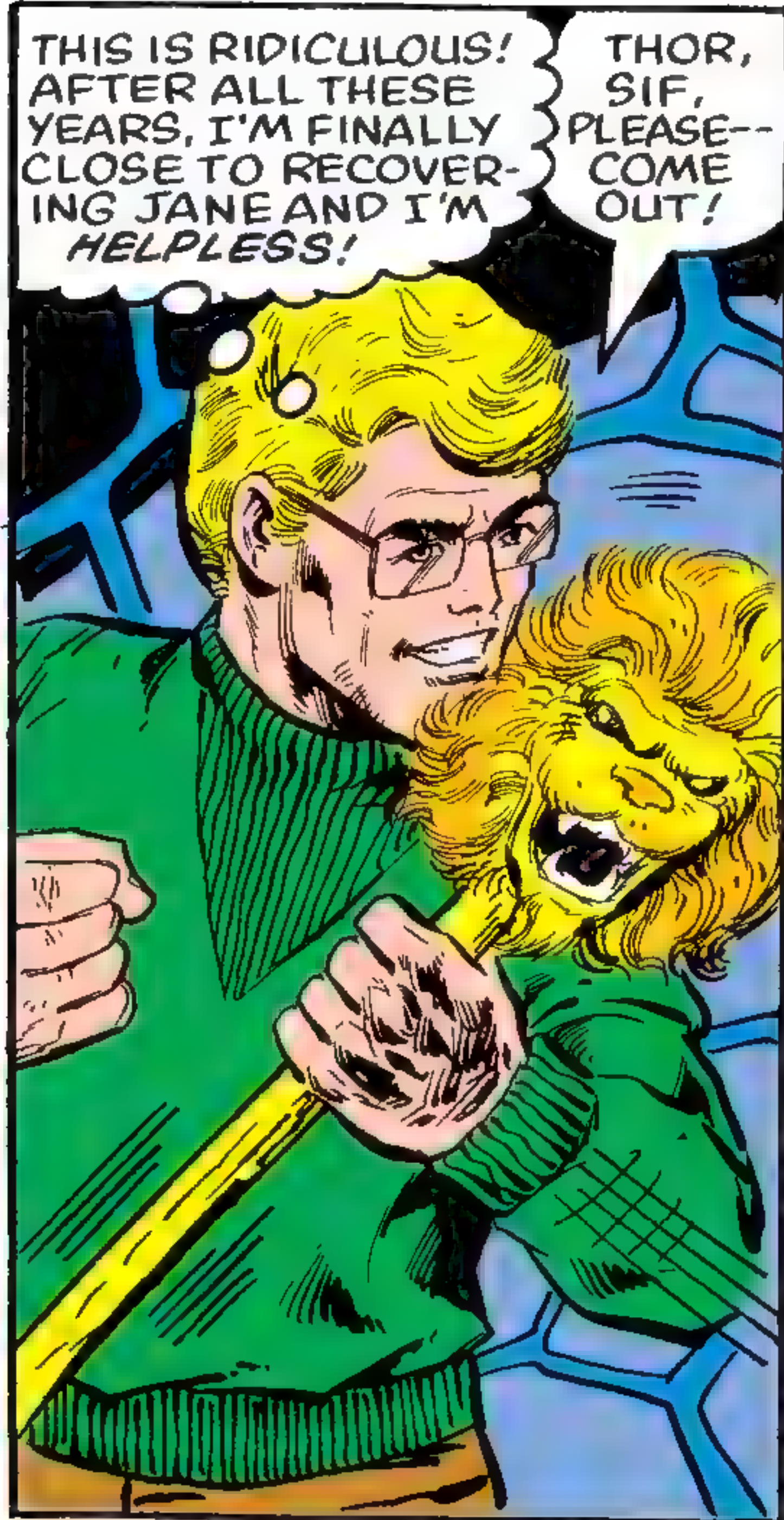


OR THEMSELVES
SLAY, MY PRINCE!
IT NEARLY STRUCK
YOU-- BUT THIS IS
THE LAST OF THEM!

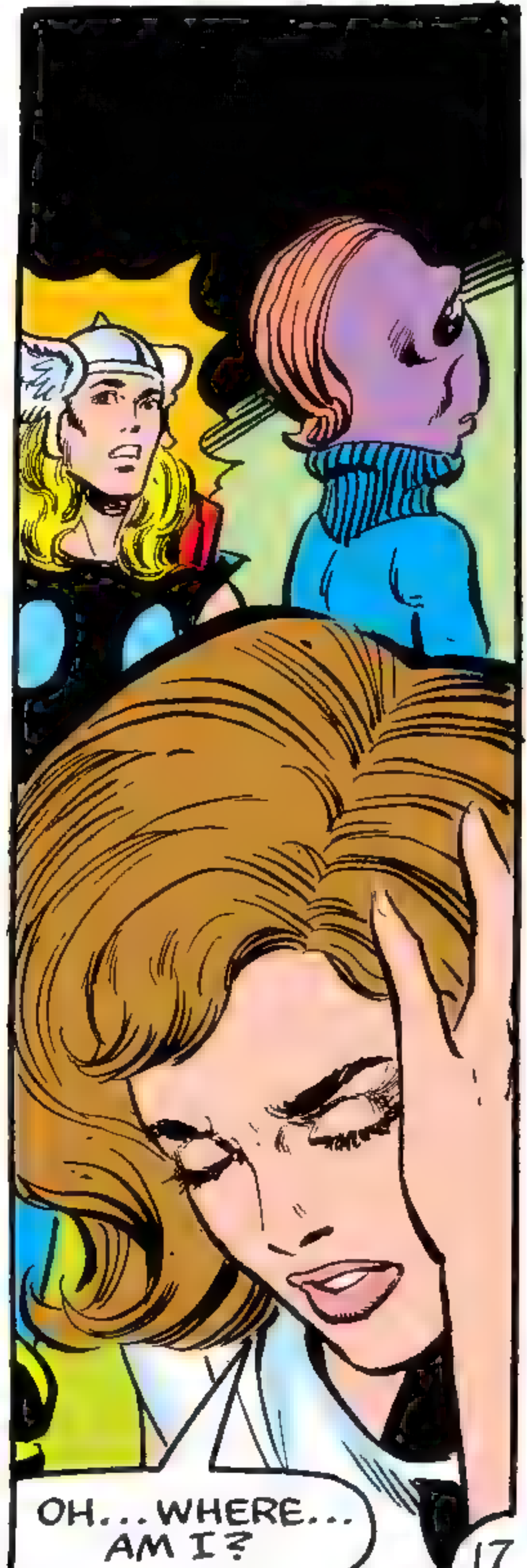
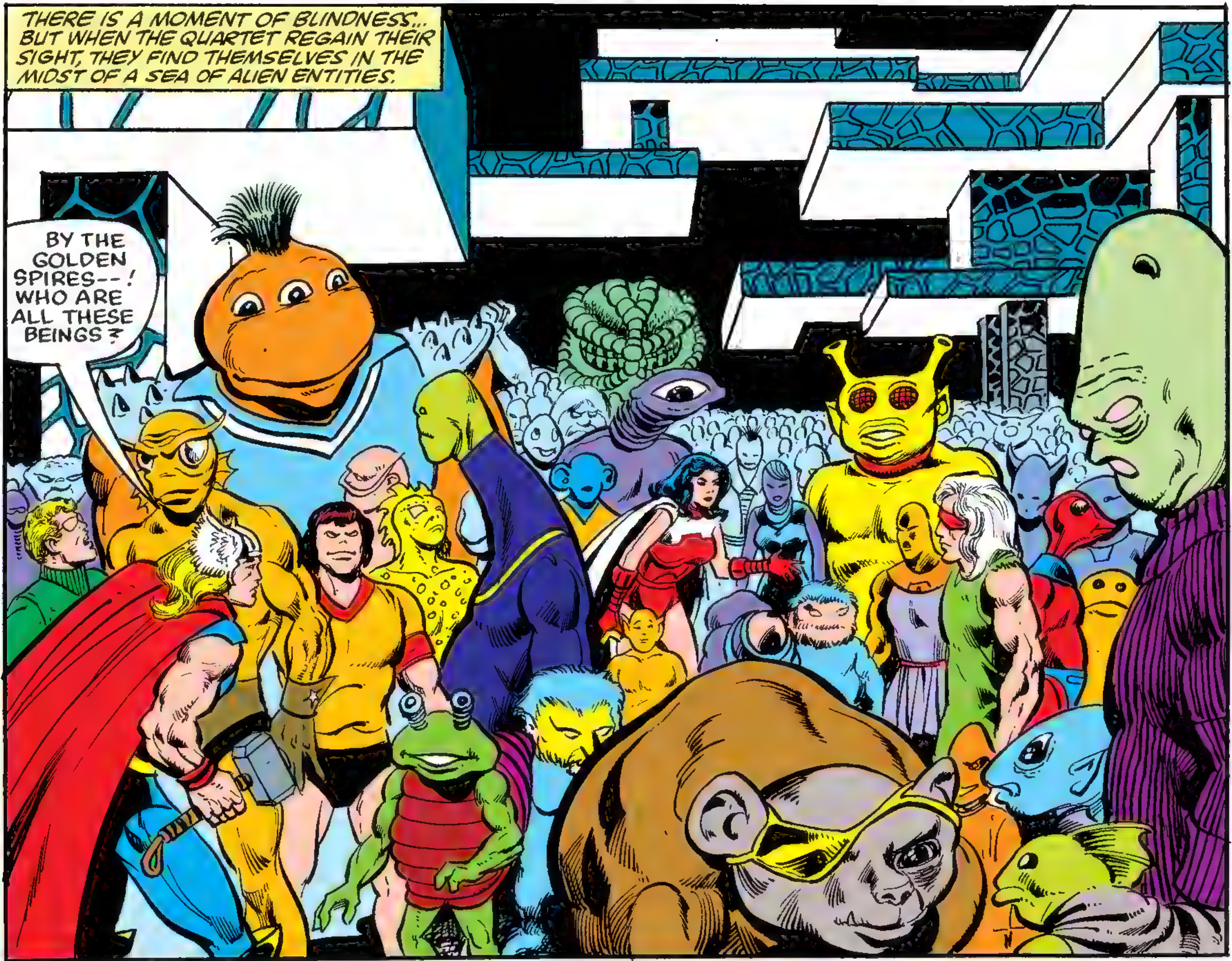
THOU ART SWORD
MAIDEN SUPREME,
INDEED, GODDESS.

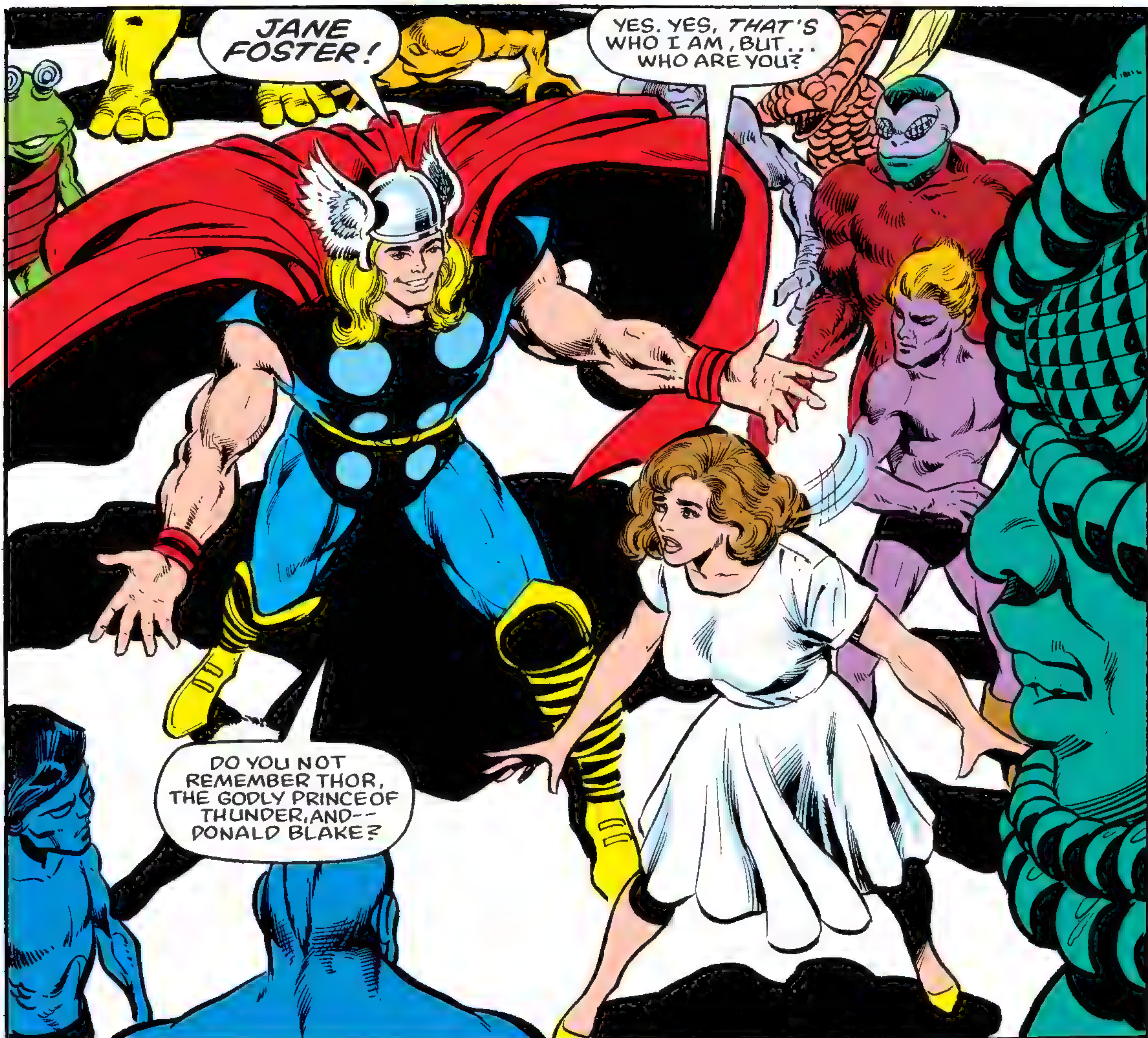


AND PERHAPS,
IN TRUTH, THOU ART
TOO GLORIOUS TO
RESIDE CONTENTEDLY
ON MIDGARD.





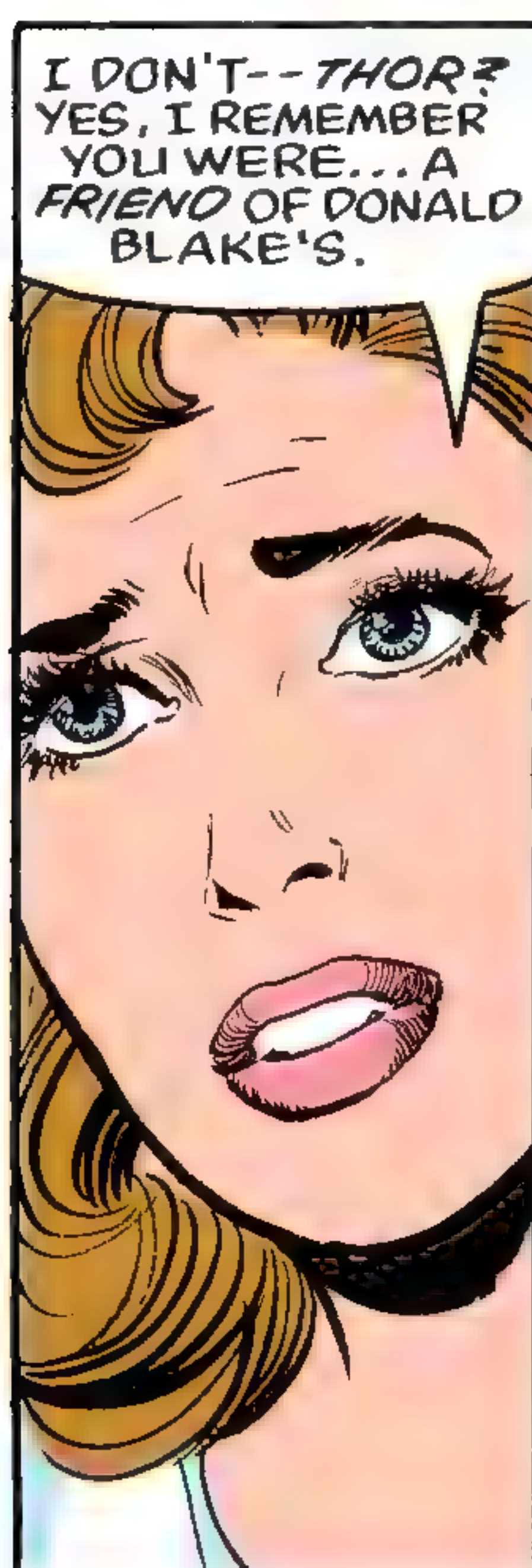




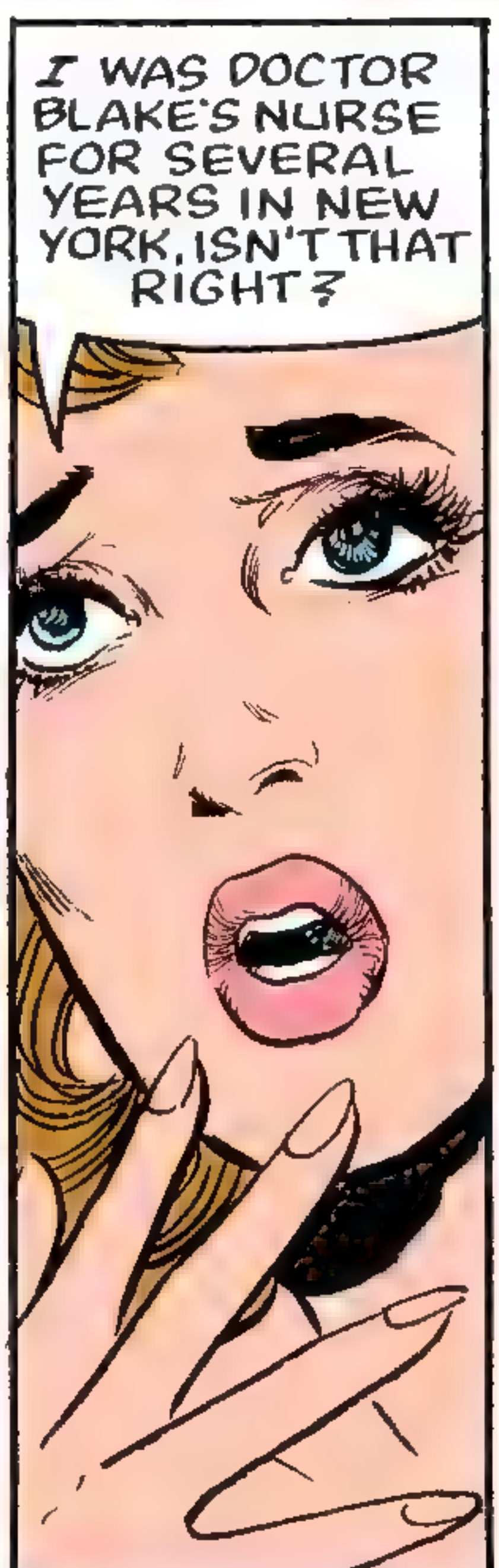
JANE FOSTER!

YES. YES, THAT'S WHO I AM, BUT... WHO ARE YOU?

DO YOU NOT REMEMBER THOR, THE GODLY PRINCE OF THUNDER, AND-- DONALD BLAKE?



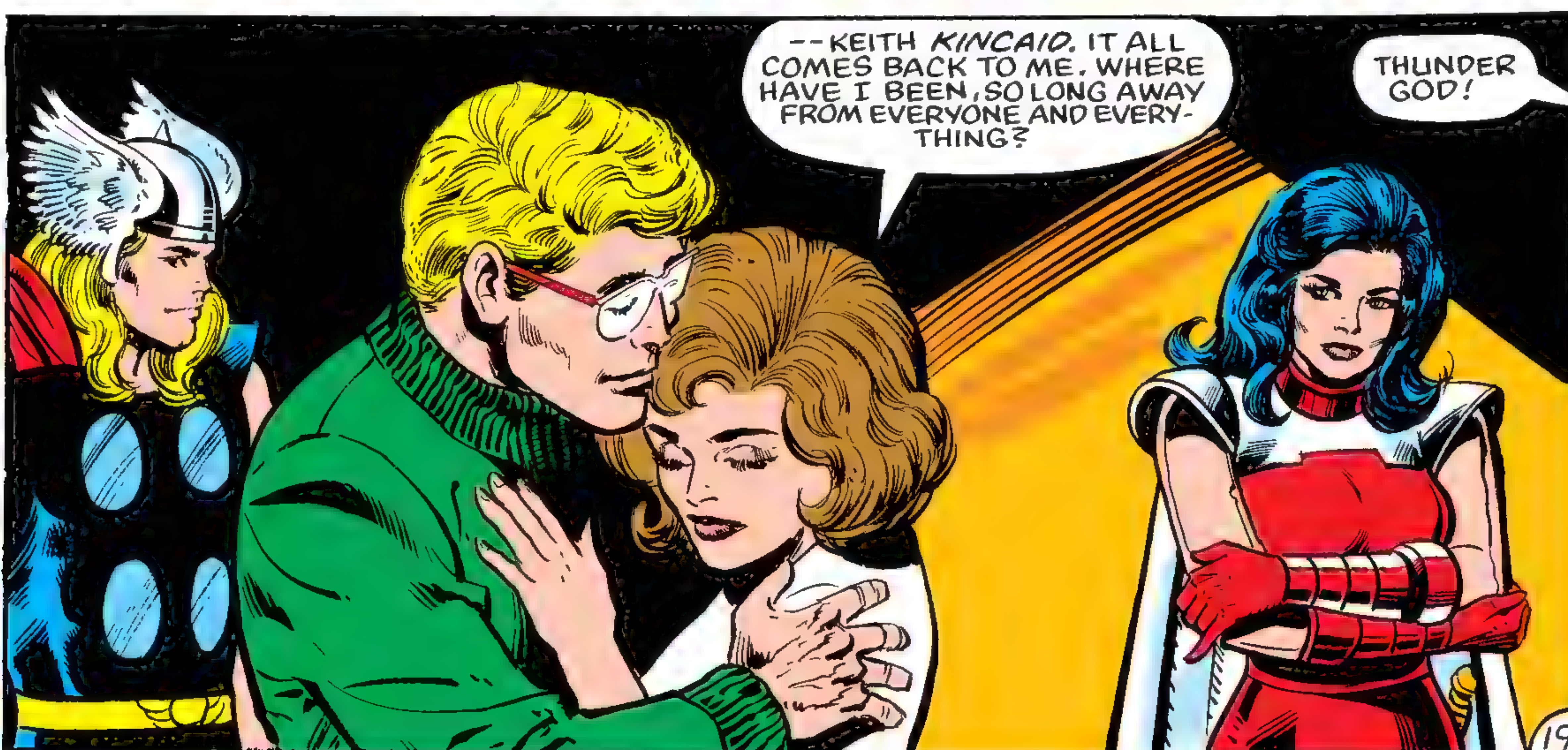
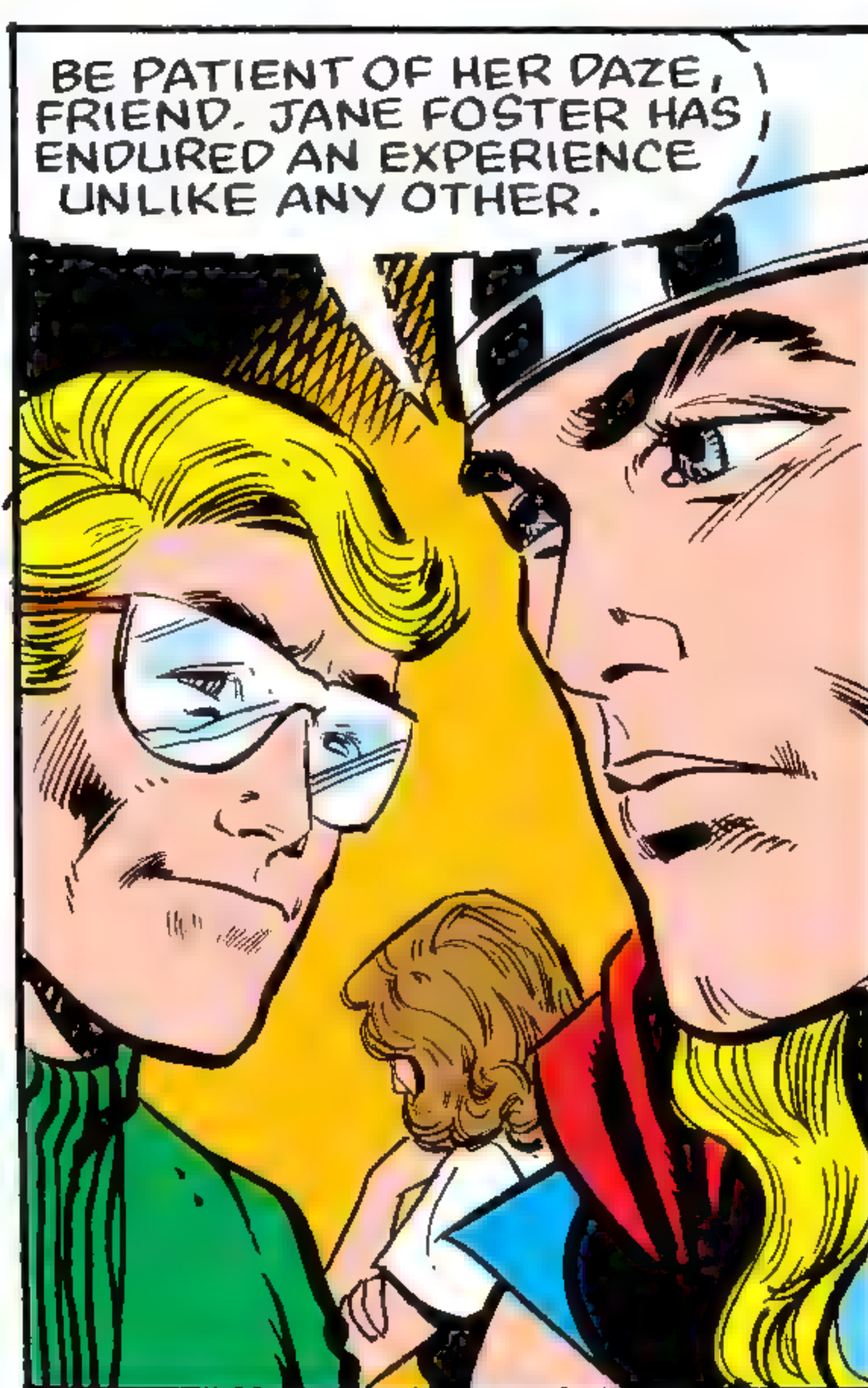
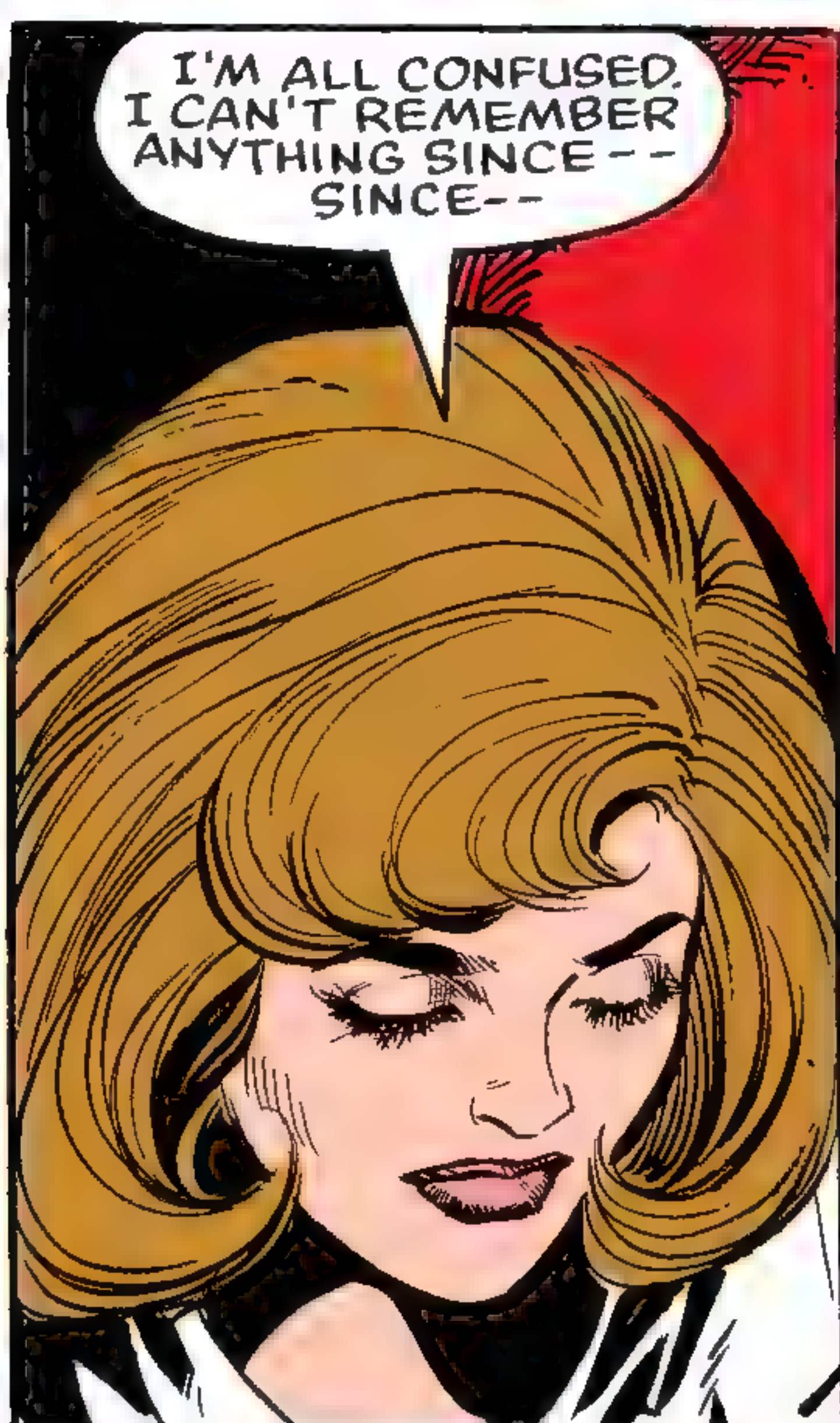
I DON'T-- THOR? YES, I REMEMBER YOU WERE... A FRIEND OF DONALD BLAKE'S.



I WAS DOCTOR BLAKE'S NURSE FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN NEW YORK, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?



CAN JANE HAVE FORGOTTEN ME-- HER FIANCE--?



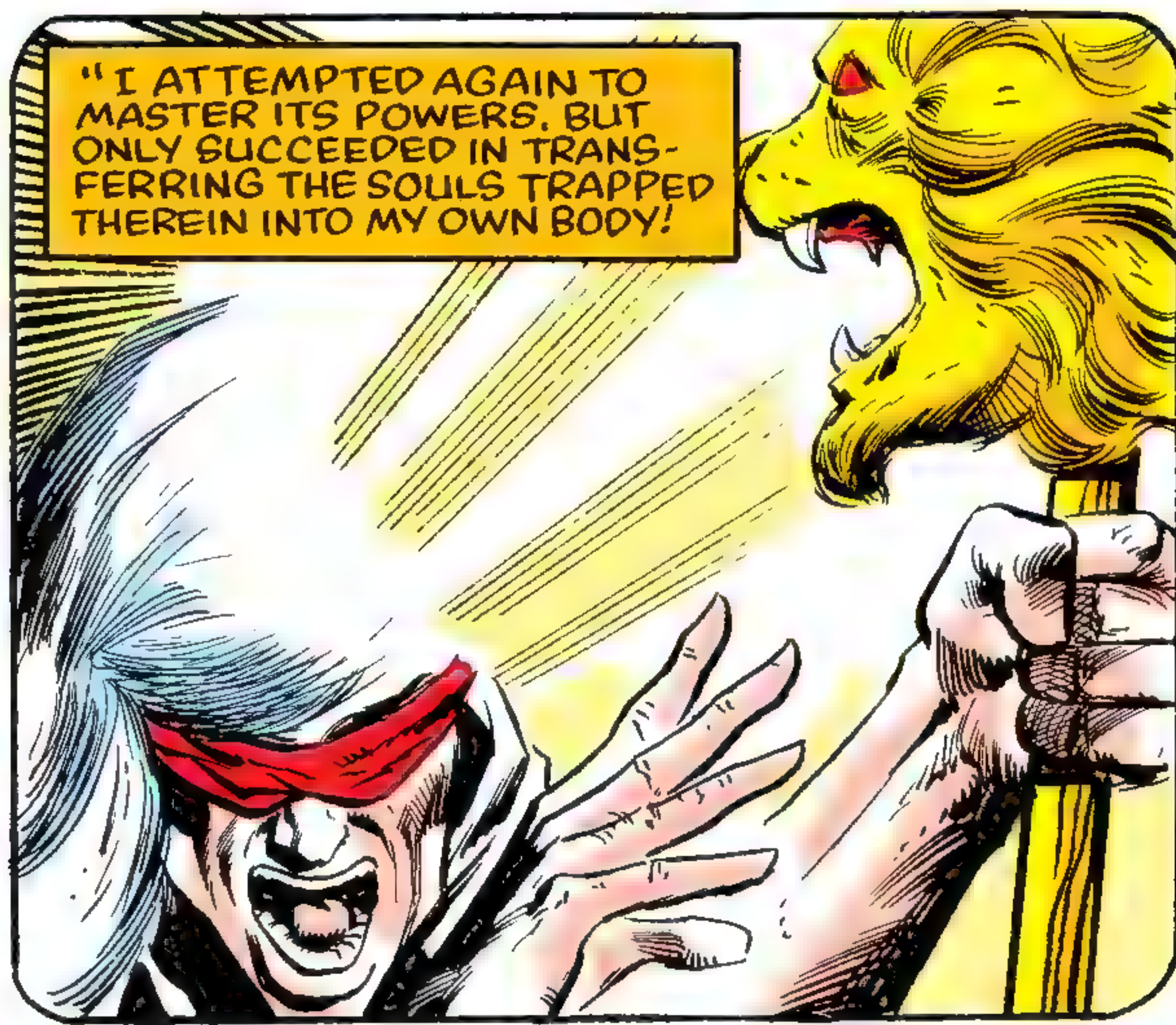


ONCE AGAIN
MY MIND IS SOUND.
MY REASON HAS RETURNED!
NO LONGER AM I POSSESSED
BY THE SPIRITS OF ALL
THESE YOU BEHOLD.

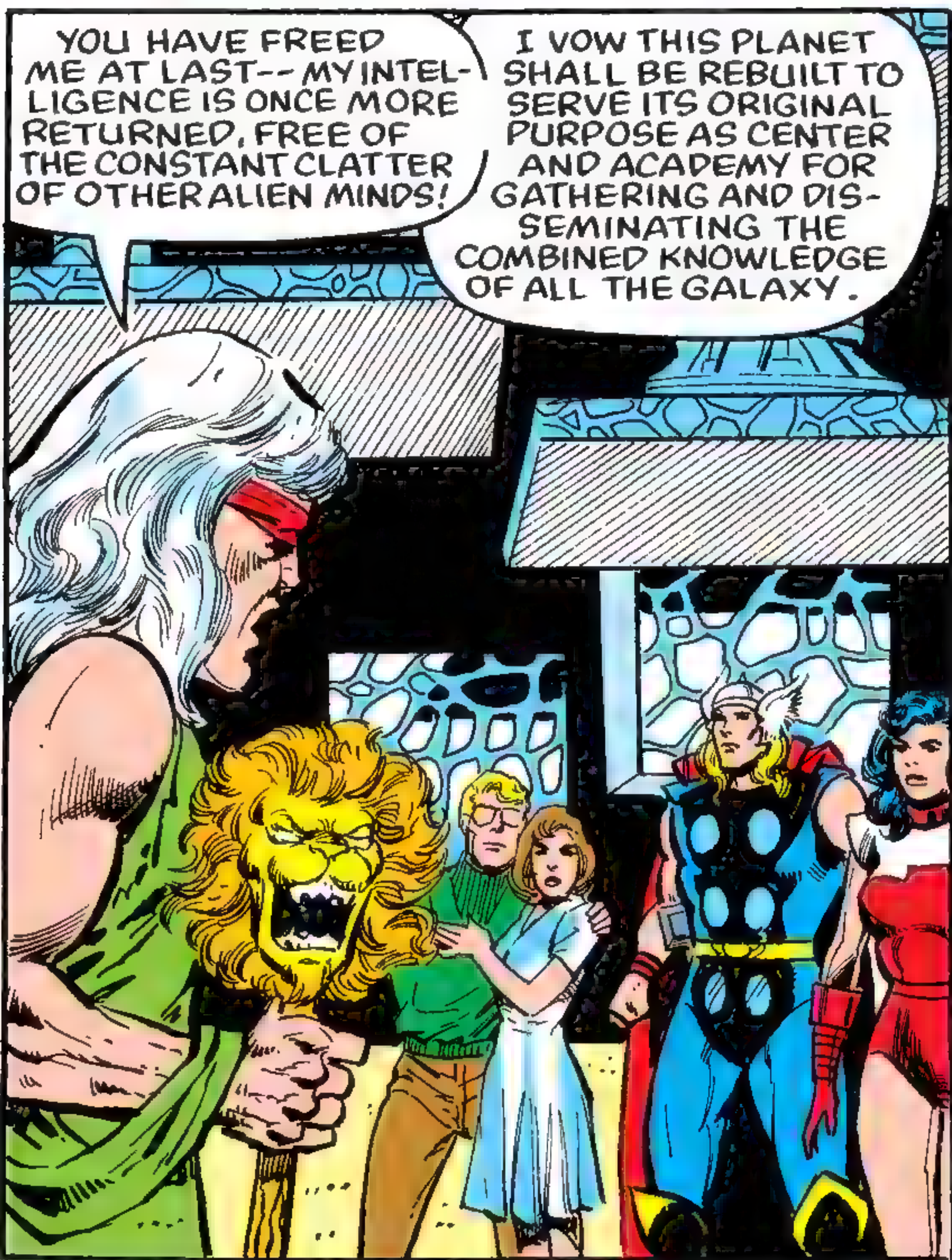


"I RECALL IT ALL PERFECTLY
NOW! YOU, SIF, HAD TAKEN
THE STAFF AWAY FROM ME
AGAINST MY WILL..."

"IT WAS LOST
FOR SUCH TIME
UNTIL I WAS ABLE
TO REMEMBER
THE RITUAL OF
RETRIEVAL."



"I ATTEMPTED AGAIN TO
MASTER ITS POWERS, BUT
ONLY SUCCEEDED IN TRANS-
FERRING THE SOULS TRAPPED
THEREIN INTO MY OWN BODY!"

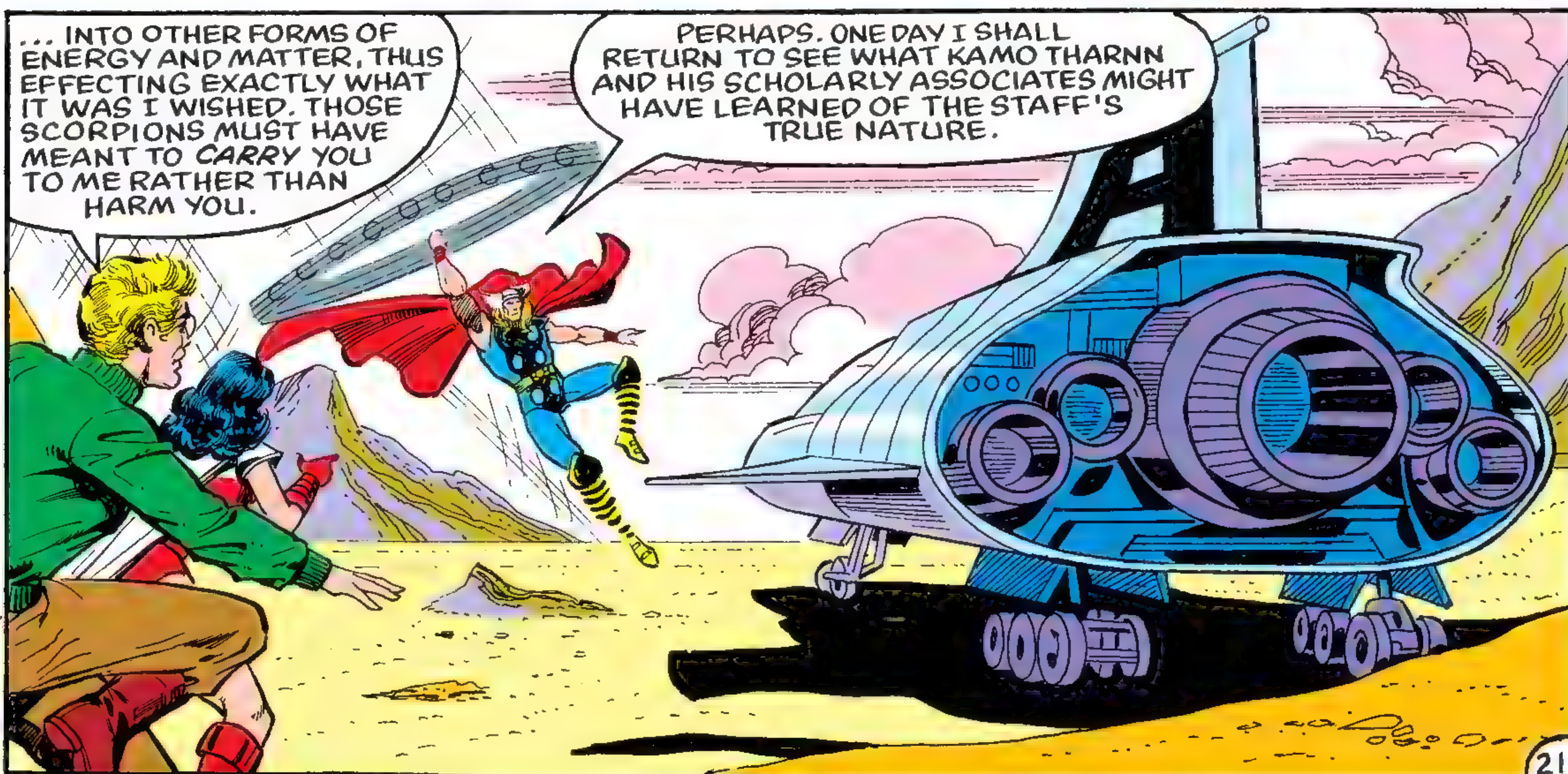
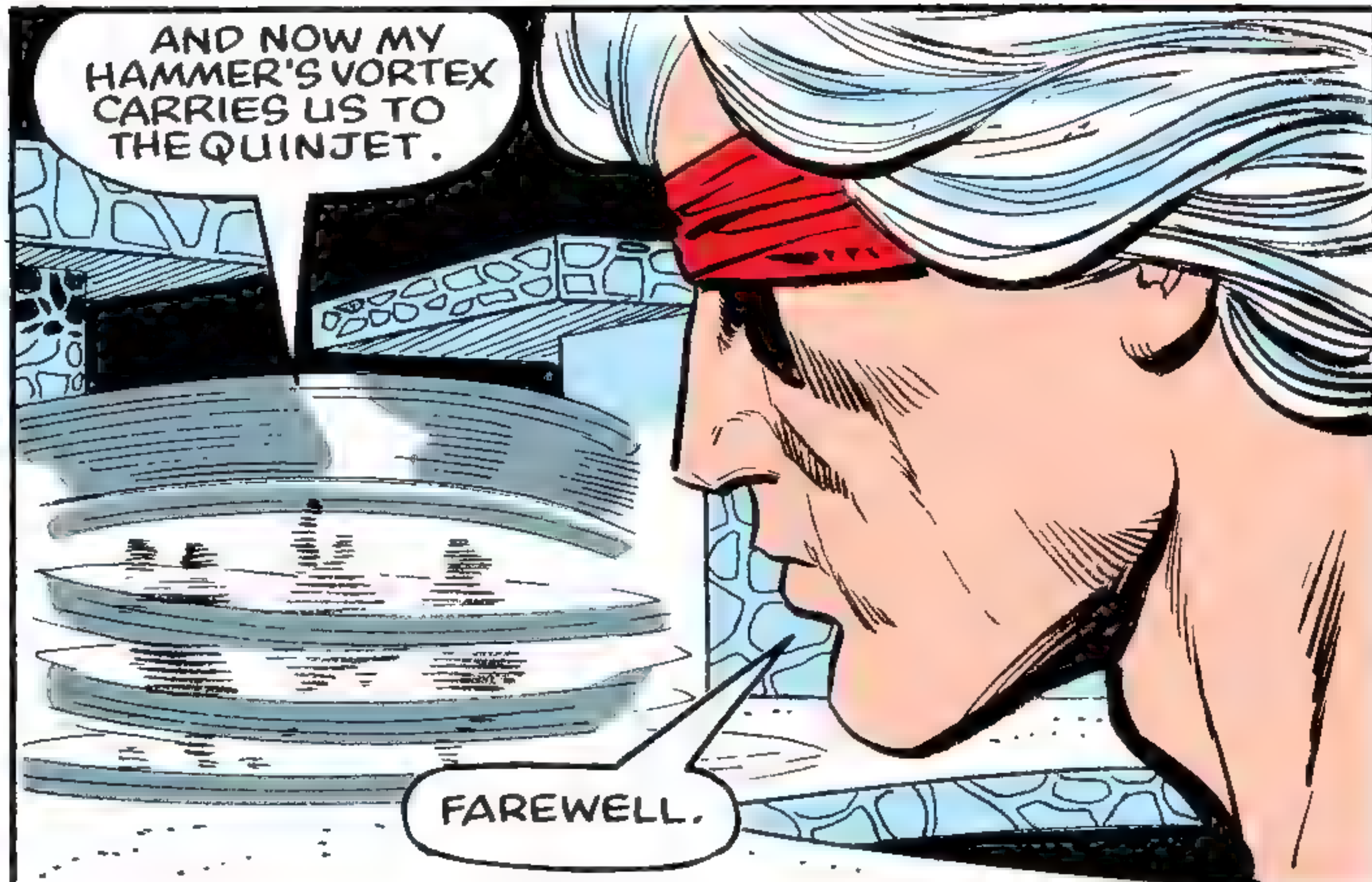
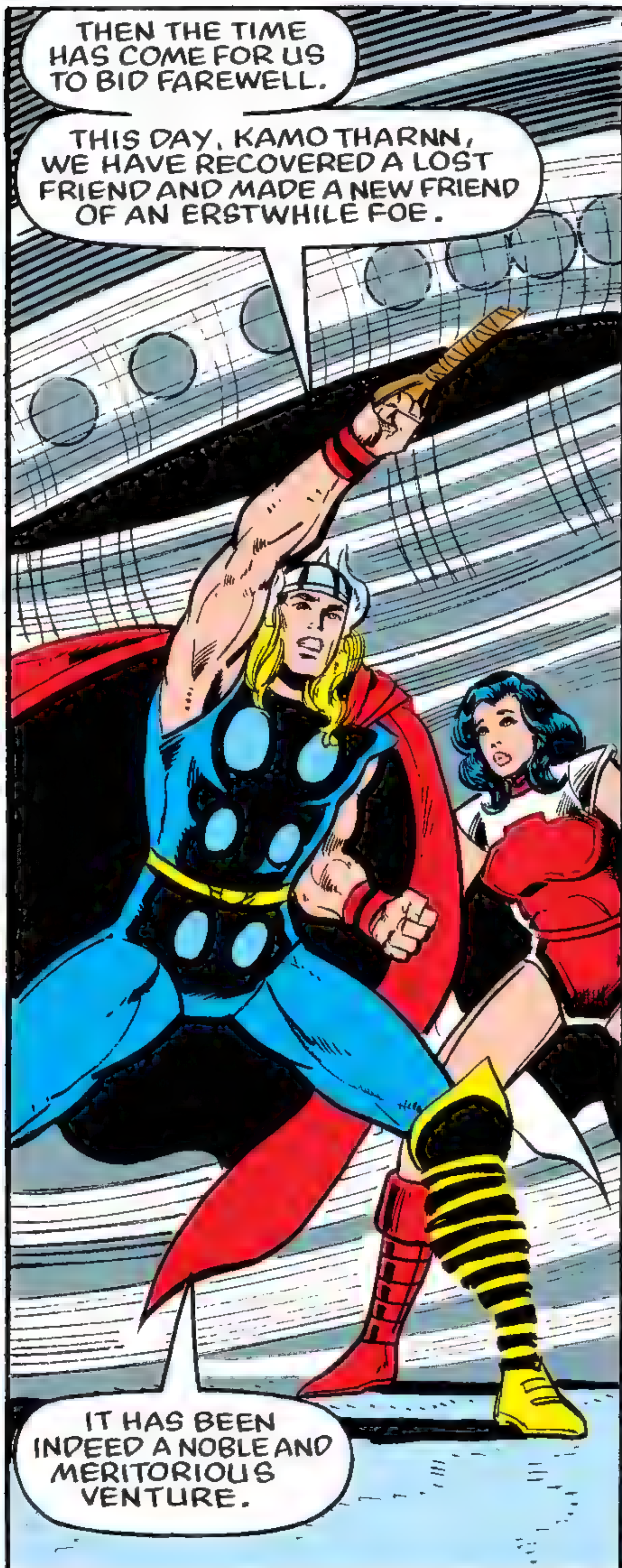


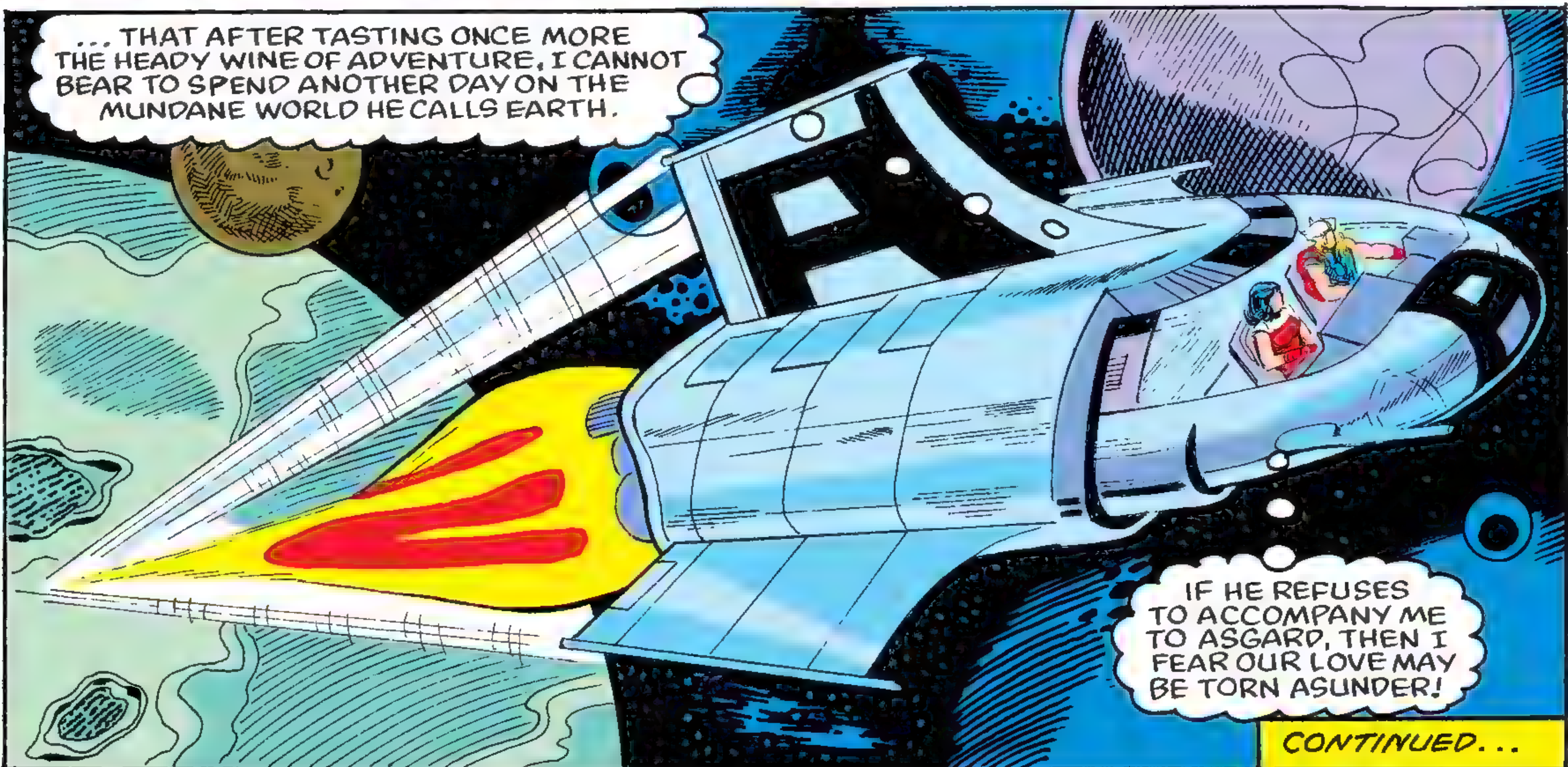
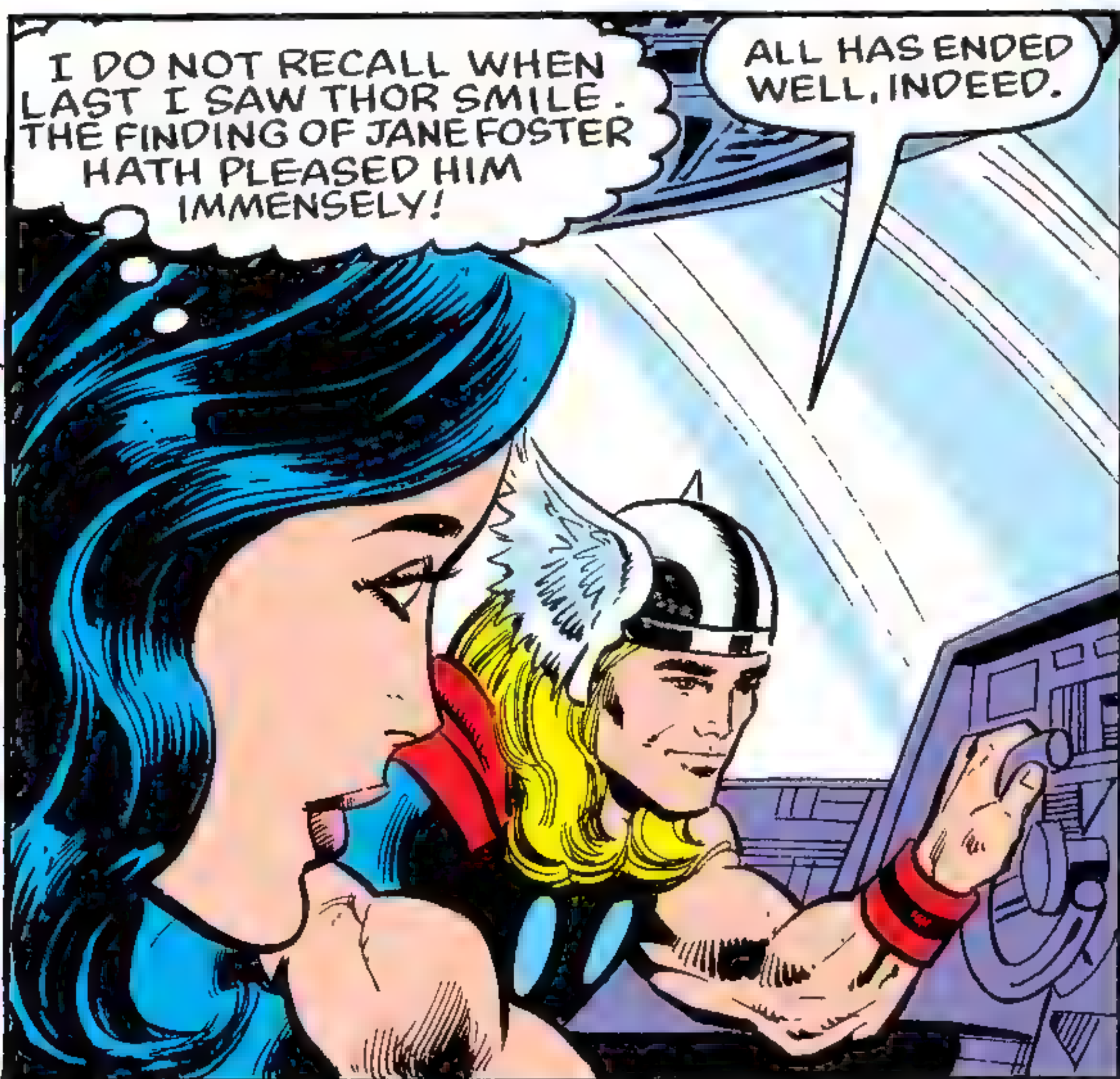
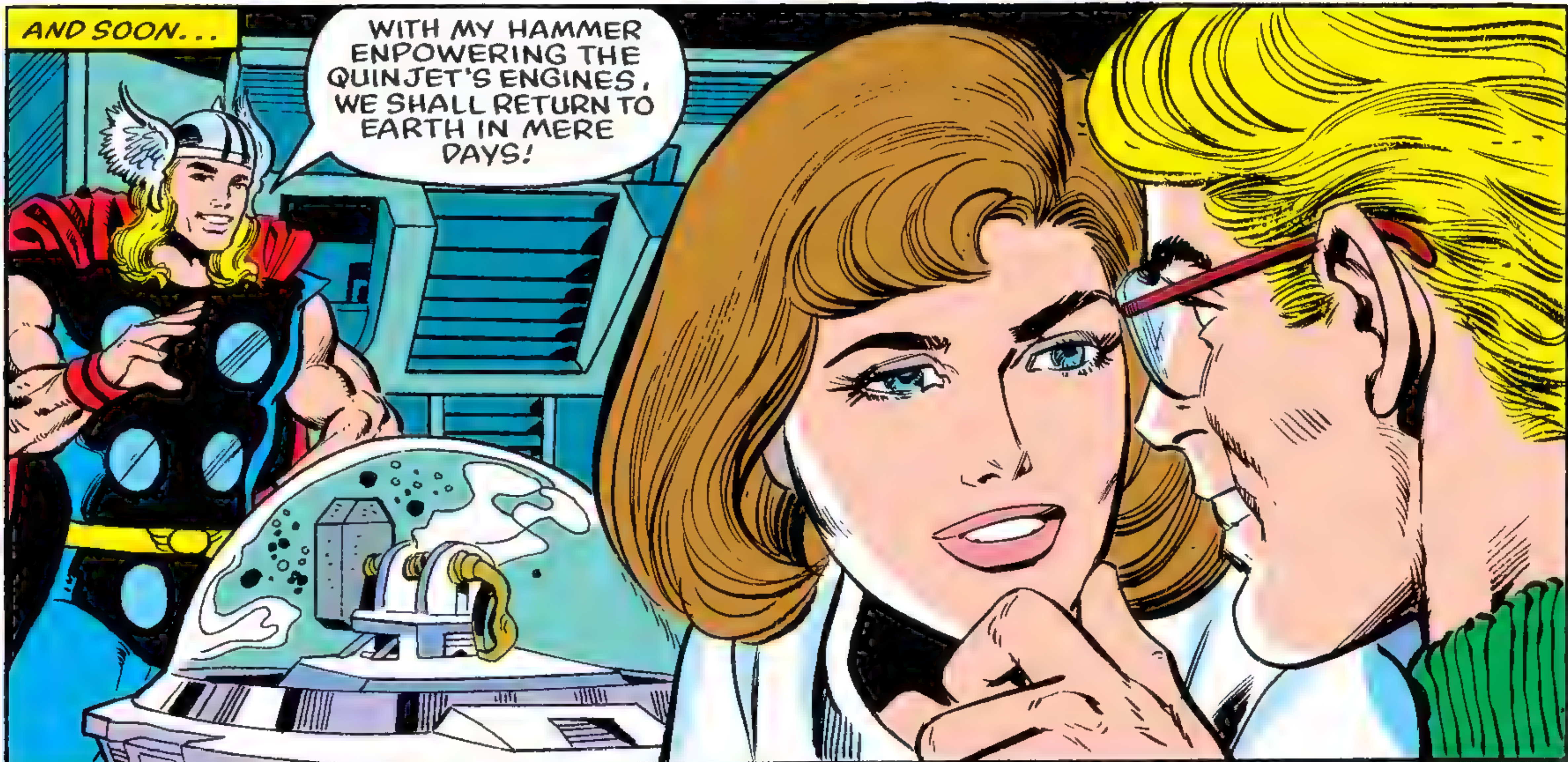
YOU HAVE FREED
ME AT LAST-- MY INTEL-
LIGENCE IS ONCE MORE
RETURNED, FREE OF
THE CONSTANT CLATTER
OF OTHER ALIEN MINDS!

I VOW THIS PLANET
SHALL BE REBUILT TO
SERVE ITS ORIGINAL
PURPOSE AS CENTER
AND ACADEMY FOR
GATHERING AND DIS-
SEMINATING THE
COMBINED KNOWLEDGE
OF ALL THE GALAXY.



THE RUNESTAFF
SHALL BE STUDIED
THOROUGHLY, AND ONLY
WHEN IT MAY BE PUT TO
GOOD AND MORAL USE
SHALL IT BE USED
AT ALL.





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A TURNING POINT IN THE LIFE OF A THUNDER GOD!

THE
MIGHTY

THOR®

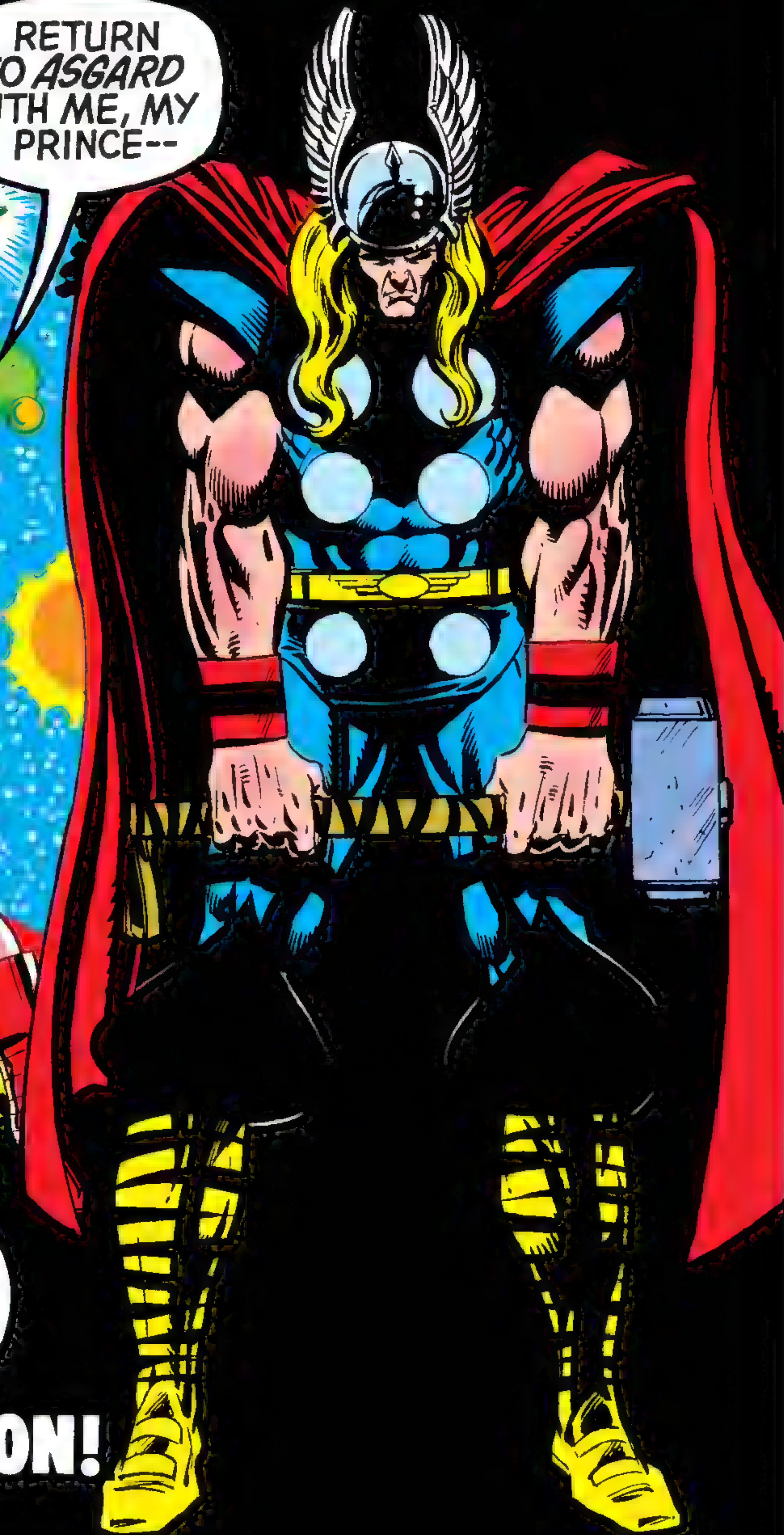
RETURN
TO *ASGARD*
WITH ME, MY
PRINCE--



--OR
FORSAKE
OUR LOVE
FOREVER!

THE DECISION!

E. BLAYTON



When DR. DONALD BLAKE strikes his wooden walking-stick upon the ground, it becomes the mystic hammer MJOLNIR—and the lame physician is transformed into the Norse God of Thunder, Master of the Storm, Lord of the Living Lightning—and heir to the throne of eternal Asgard...

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY THOR!**

ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPTER

HERB TRIMPE
ARTIST

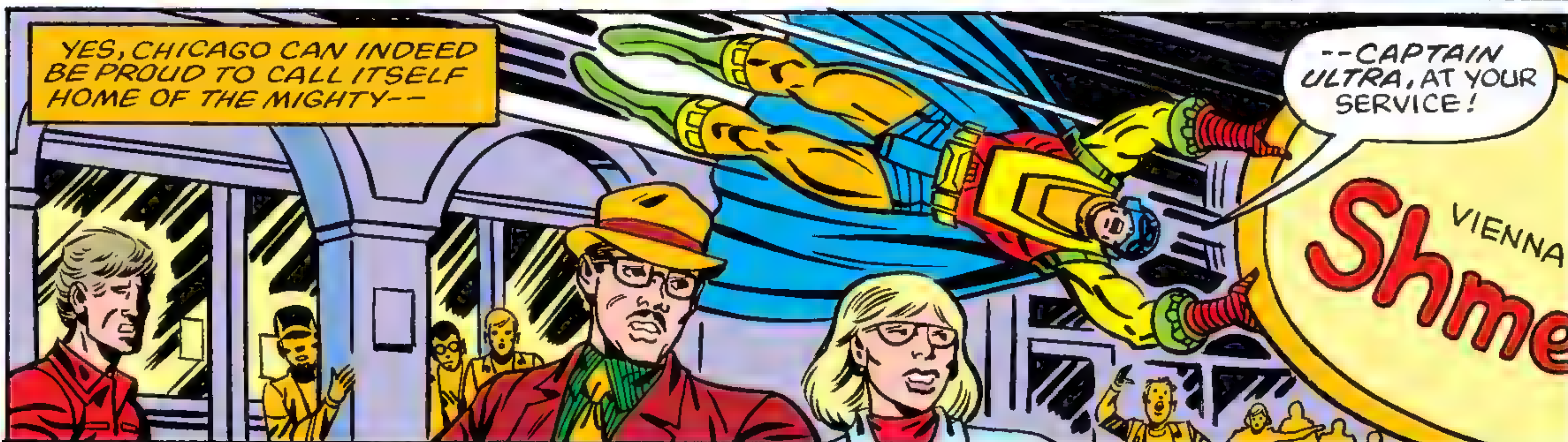
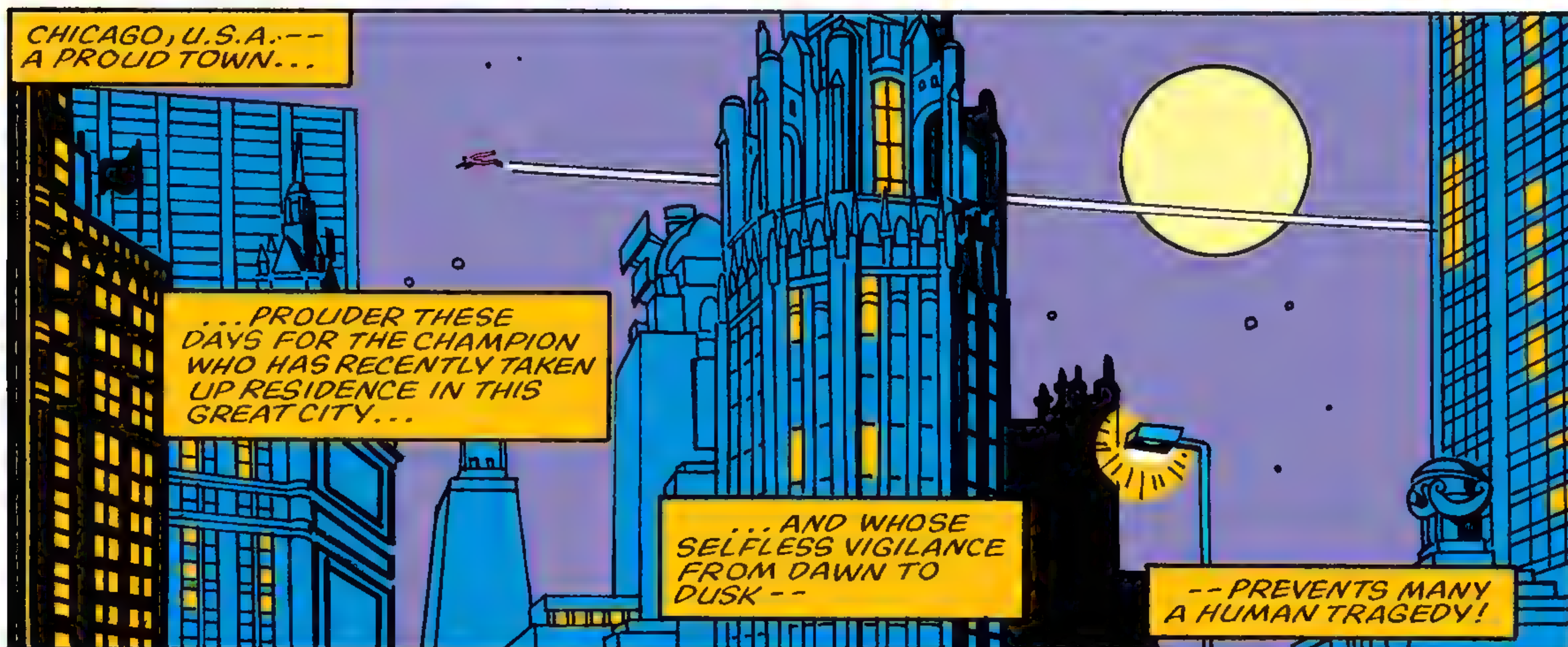
JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER

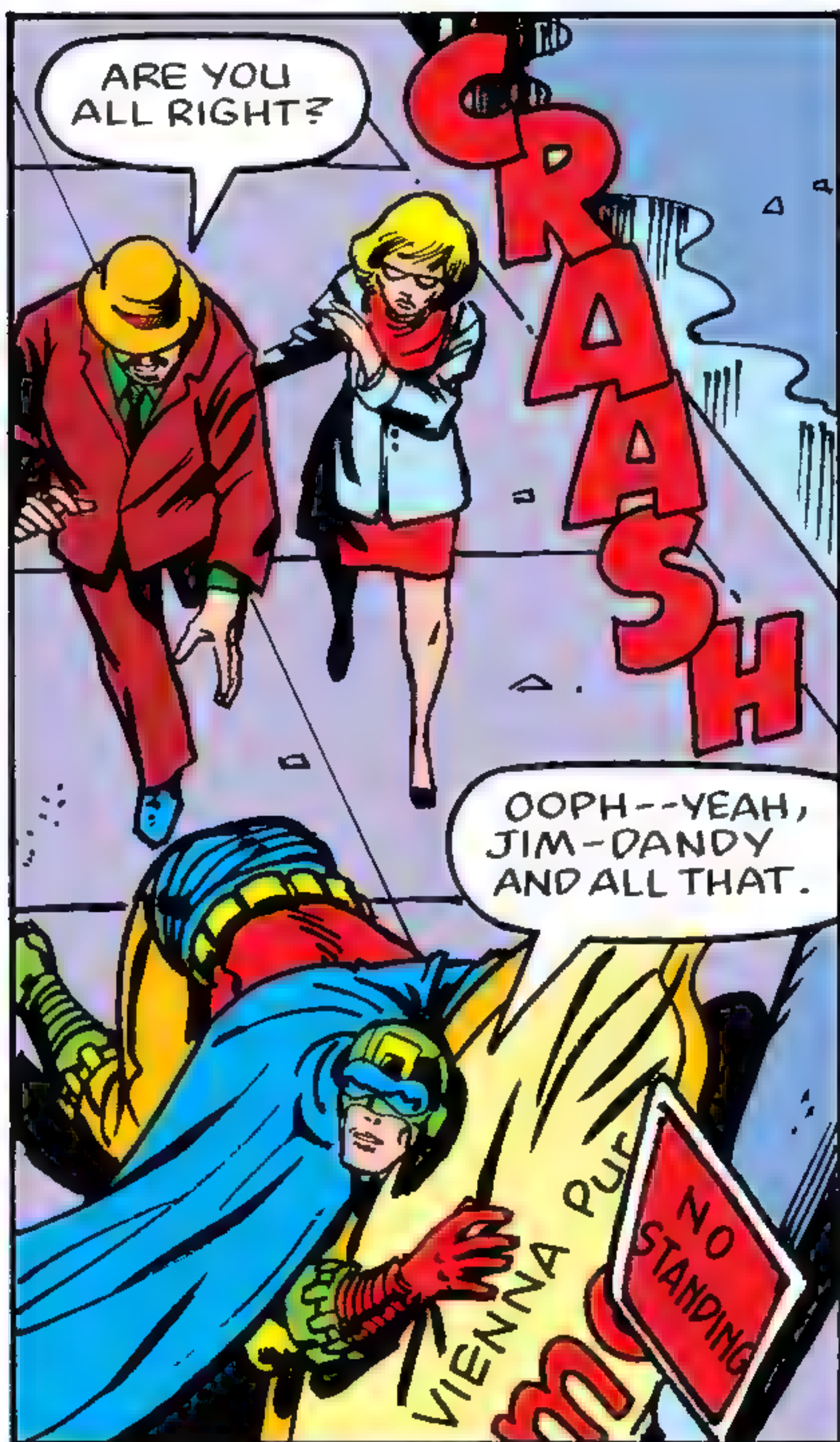
GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

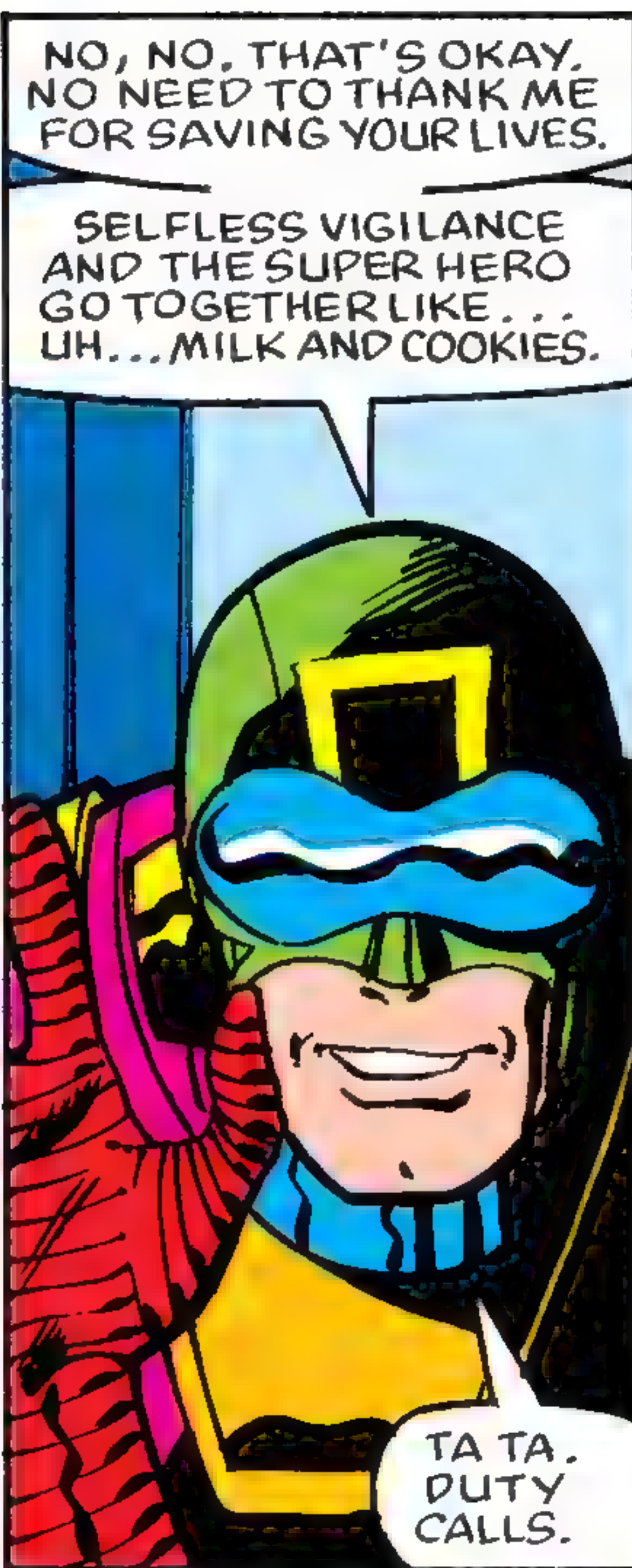
OF GODS AND MEN





ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

OOPH--YEAH, JIM-DANDY AND ALL THAT.



NO, NO. THAT'S OKAY. NO NEED TO THANK ME FOR SAVING YOUR LIVES.

SELFLESS VIGILANCE AND THE SUPER HERO GO TOGETHER LIKE... UH... MILK AND COOKIES.

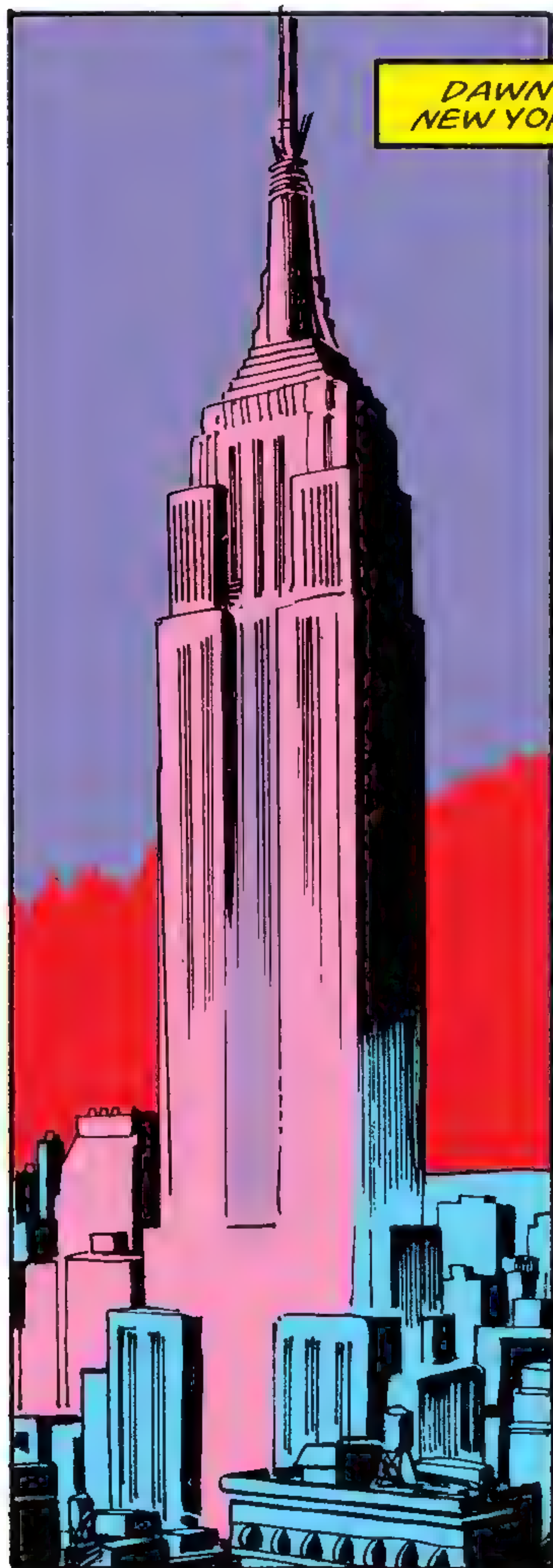
TA TA. DUTY CALLS.



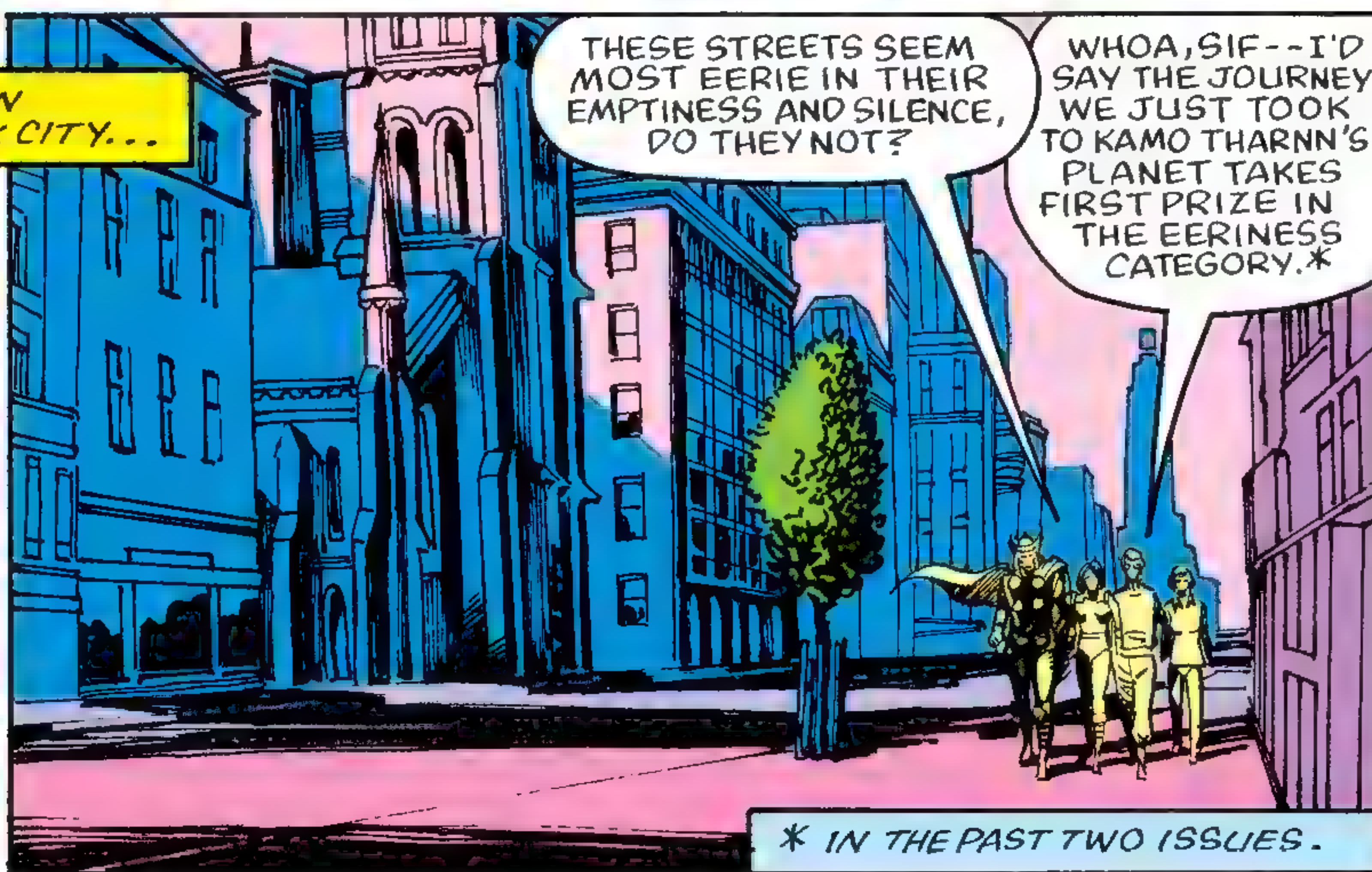
ULTRA, YOU'VE FINALLY HOOKED INTO PRIME TIME!

TRYING TO MAKE IT ALL THESE YEARS IN NEW YORK WAS ONE BUM DEAL--THE BIG APPLE'S ALREADY GOT HEROES CRAWLIN' OUT OF THE WOODWORK.

BOY, WHAT A LUCKY BREAK THE PLUMBERS' CONVENTION BROUGHT ME TO CHICAGO IN MY CIVILIAN IDENTITY, AND I DECIDED TO RELOCATE.



DAWN IN NEW YORK CITY...



THESE STREETS SEEM MOST EERIE IN THEIR EMPTINESS AND SILENCE, DO THEY NOT?

WHOA, SIF--I'D SAY THE JOURNEY WE JUST TOOK TO KAMO THARNN'S PLANET TAKES FIRST PRIZE IN THE EERINESS CATEGORY.*

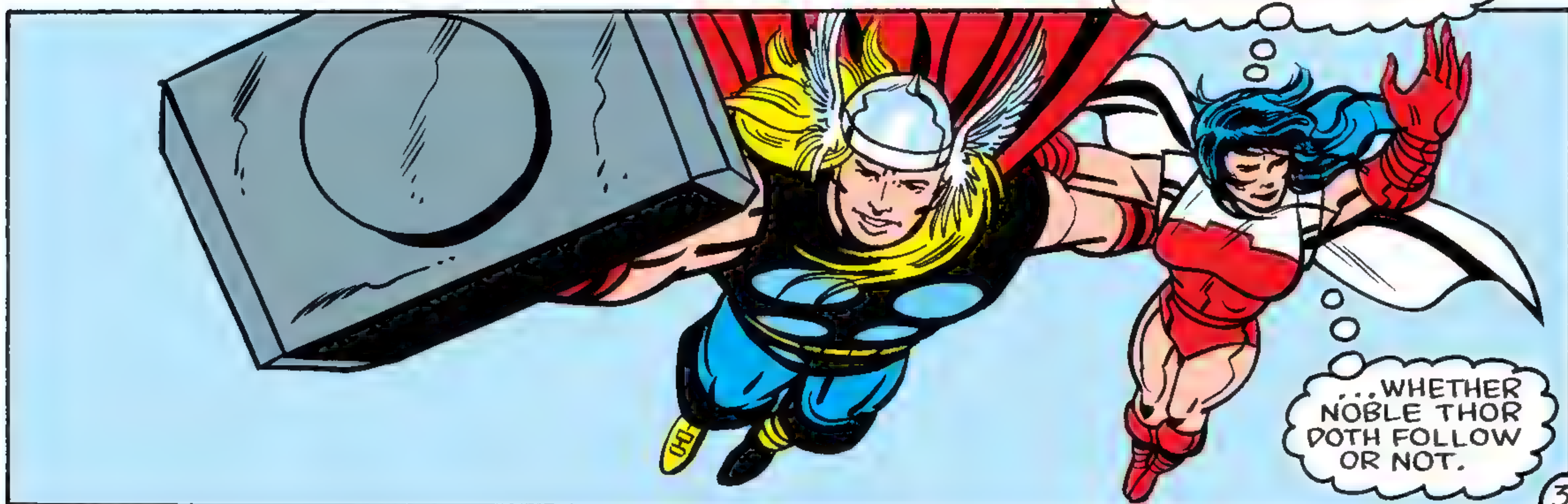
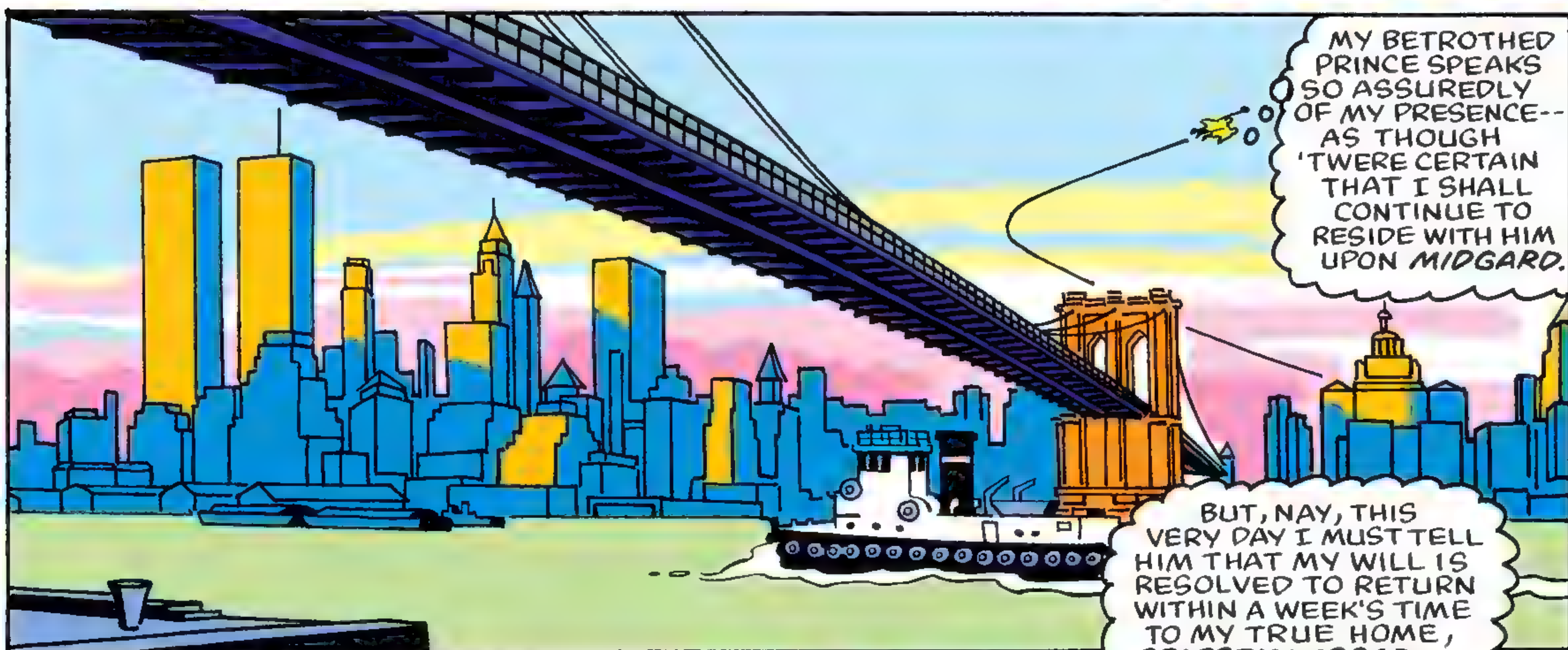
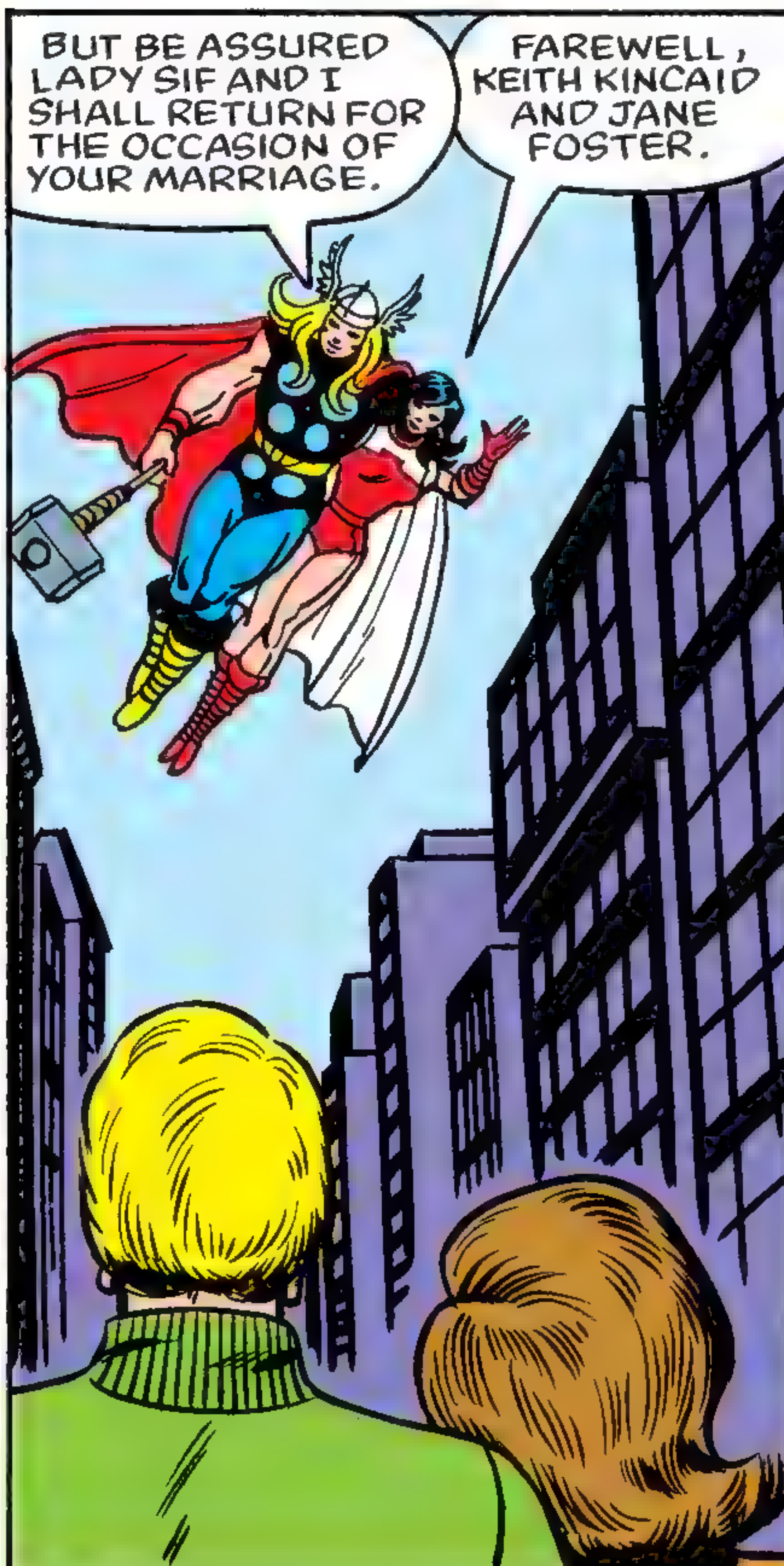
* IN THE PAST TWO ISSUES.



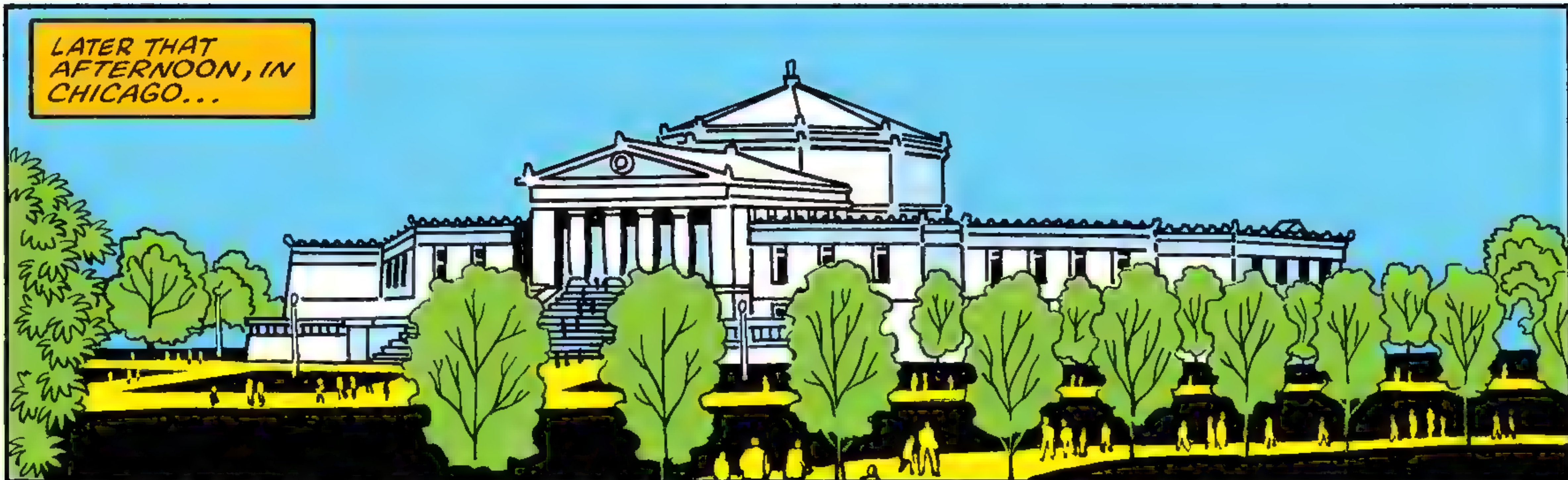
PERHAPS, DR. KINCAID. YET THE GODDESS SIF AND I HAVE KNOWN MANY WORLDS AND MANY ADVENTURES...

... SOME MORE BIZARRE AND STRANGE THAN A MORTAL MIND CAN COMPREHEND.

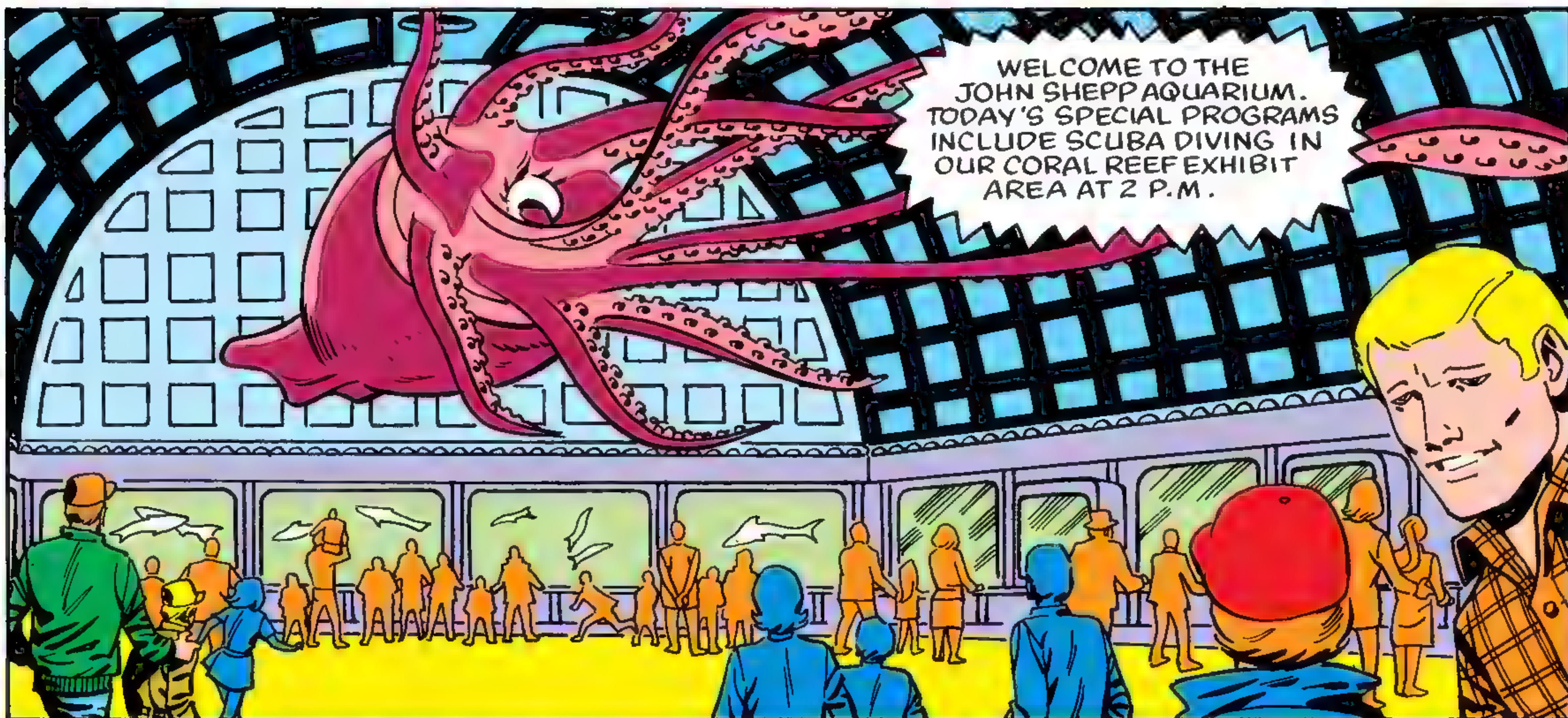
I CAN'T SAY THAT I ENVY YOU, THOUGH, THOR. UNTIL NOW I NEVER REALLY APPRECIATED THE BURDEN YOU SUPER GUYS SHOULDER.



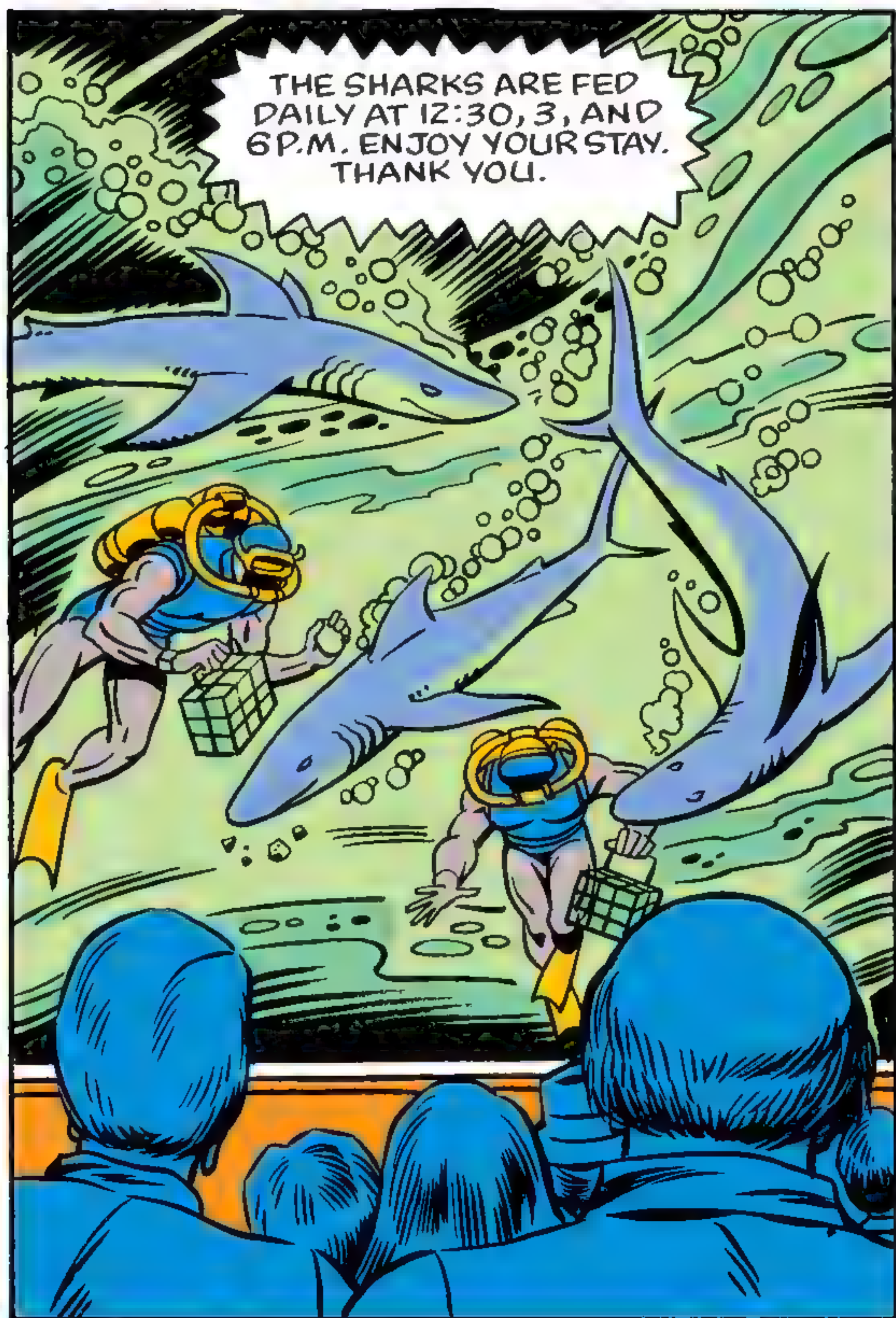
LATER THAT
AFTERNOON, IN
CHICAGO...



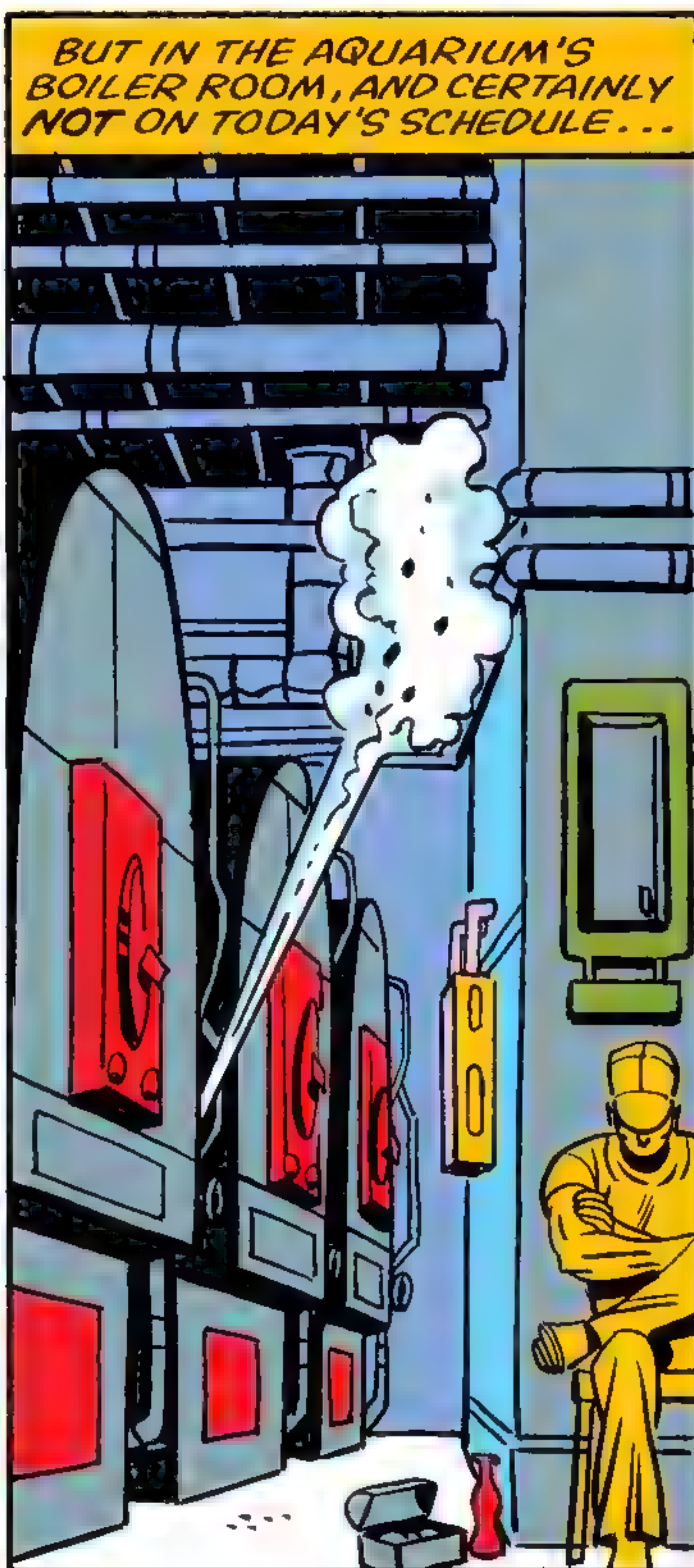
WELCOME TO THE
JOHN SHEPP AQUARIUM.
TODAY'S SPECIAL PROGRAMS
INCLUDE SCUBA DIVING IN
OUR CORAL REEF EXHIBIT
AREA AT 2 P.M.



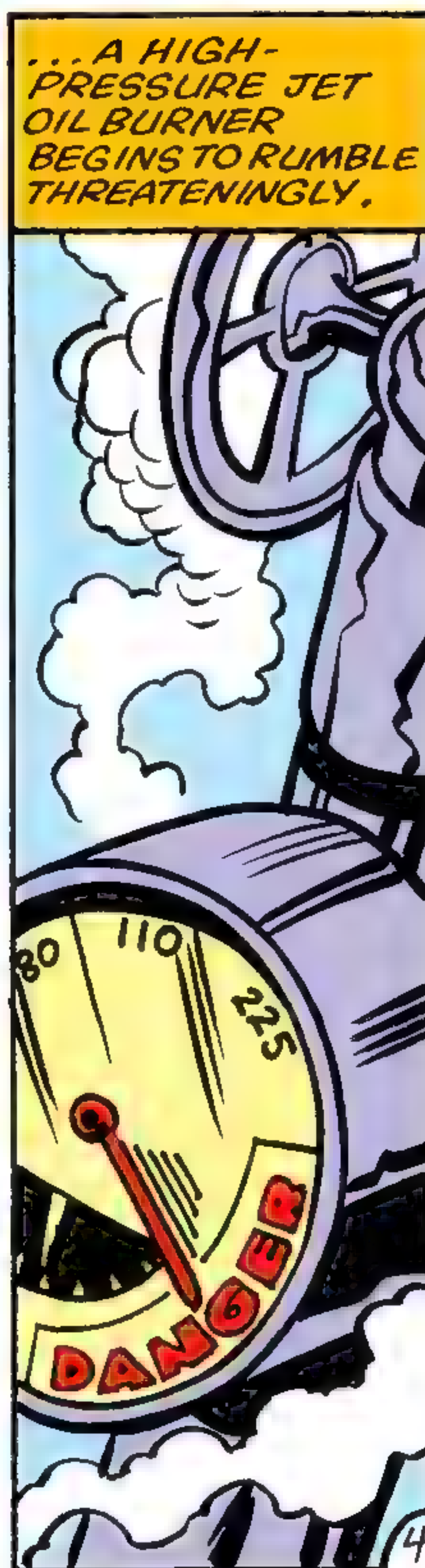
THE SHARKS ARE FED
DAILY AT 12:30, 3, AND
6 P.M. ENJOY YOUR STAY.
THANK YOU.

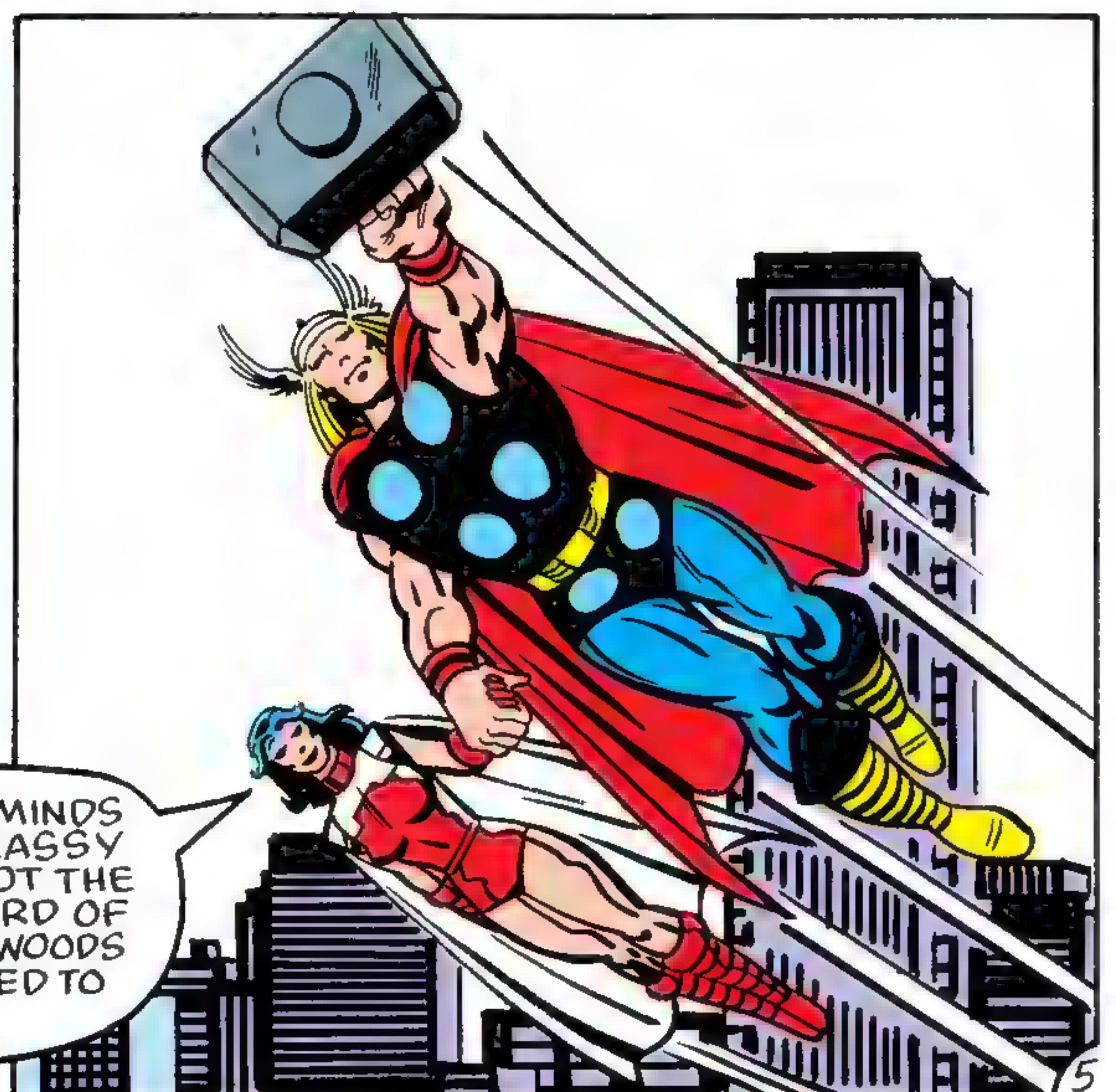
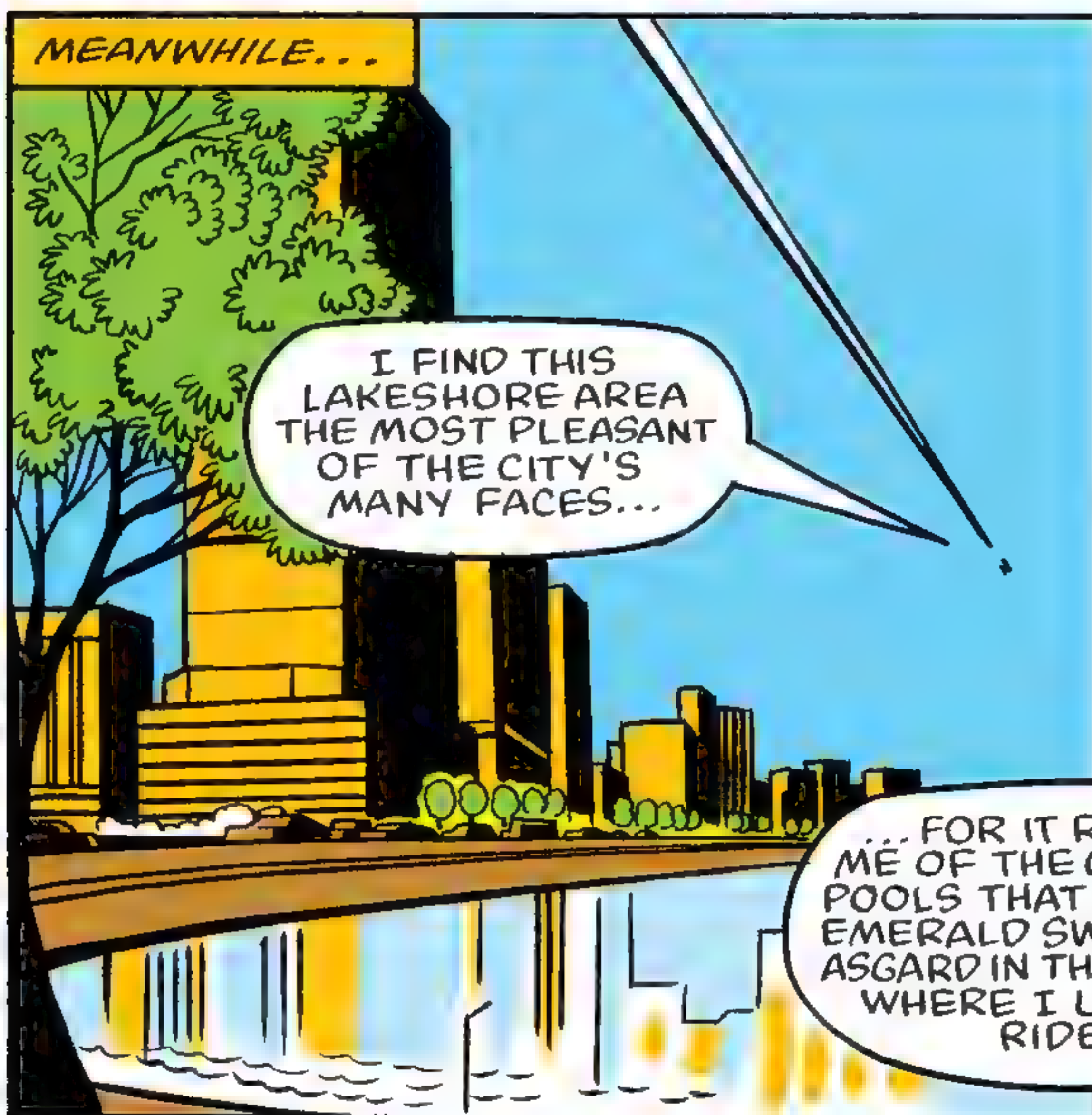
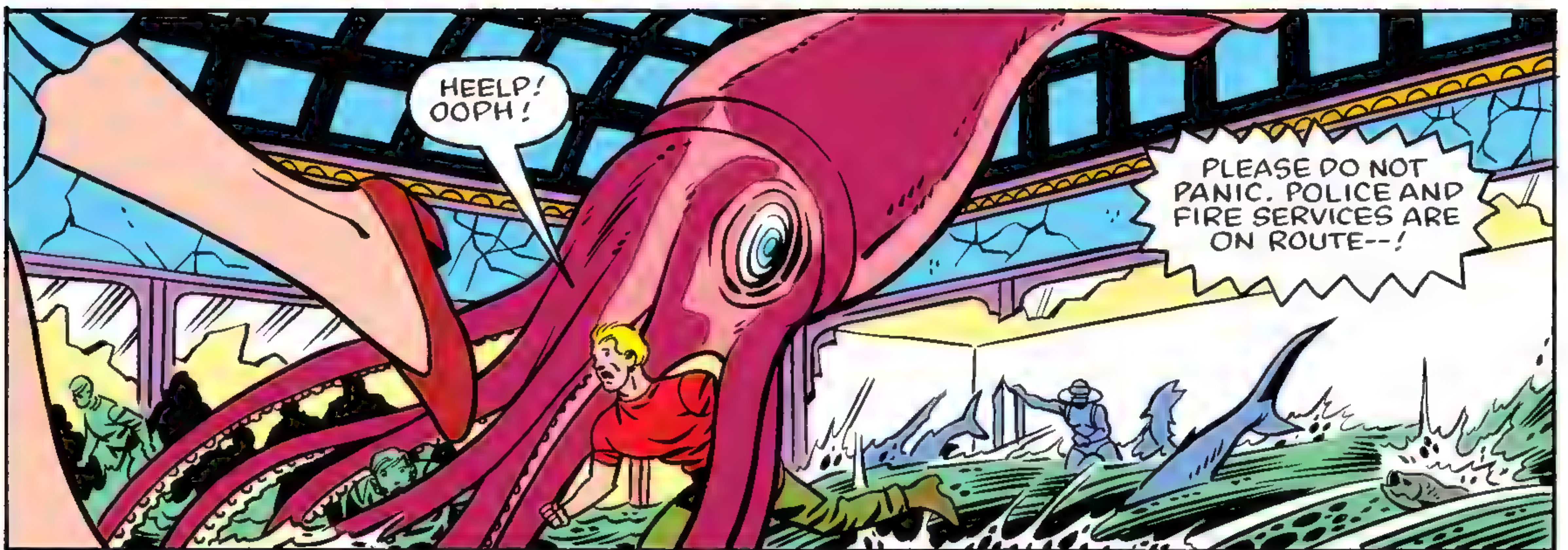


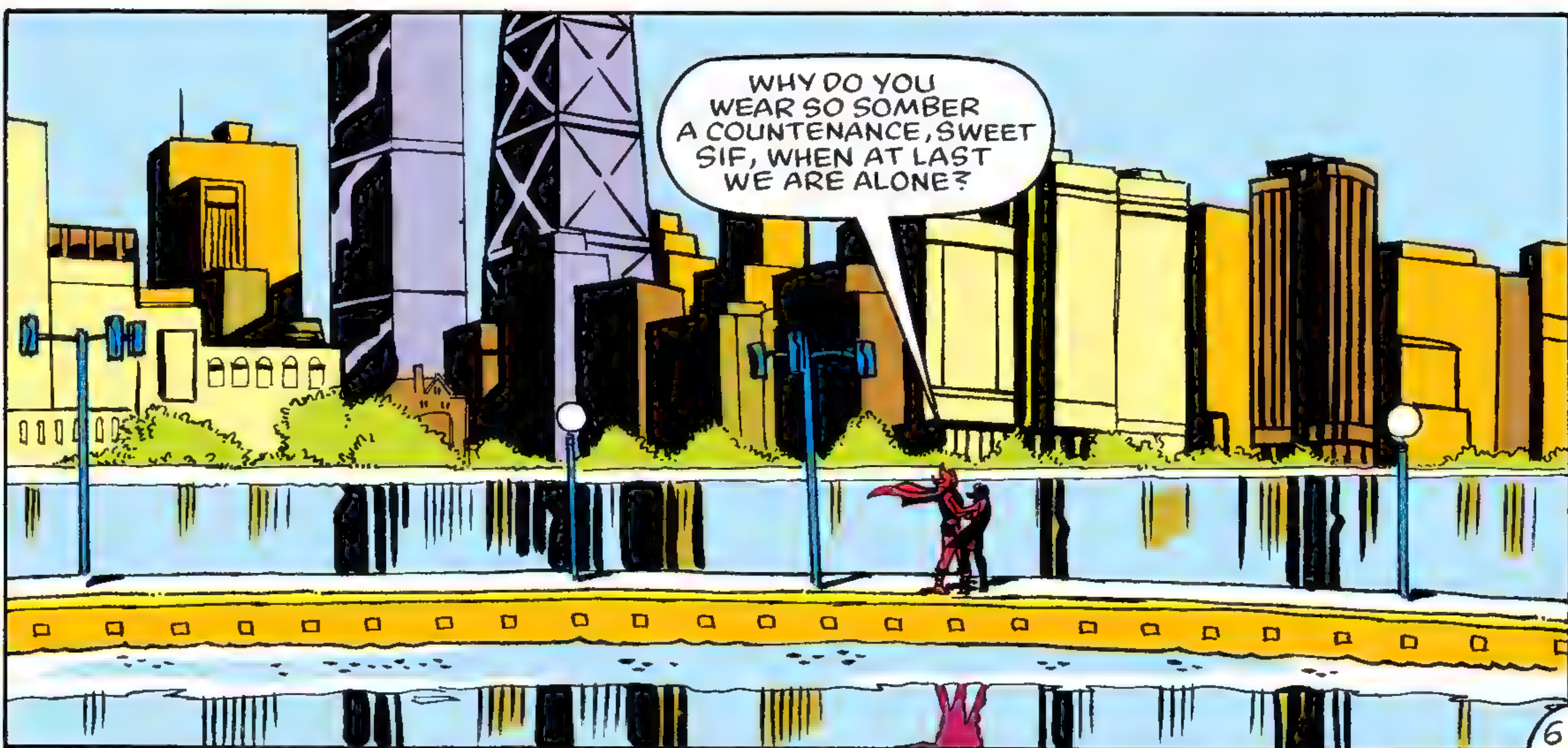
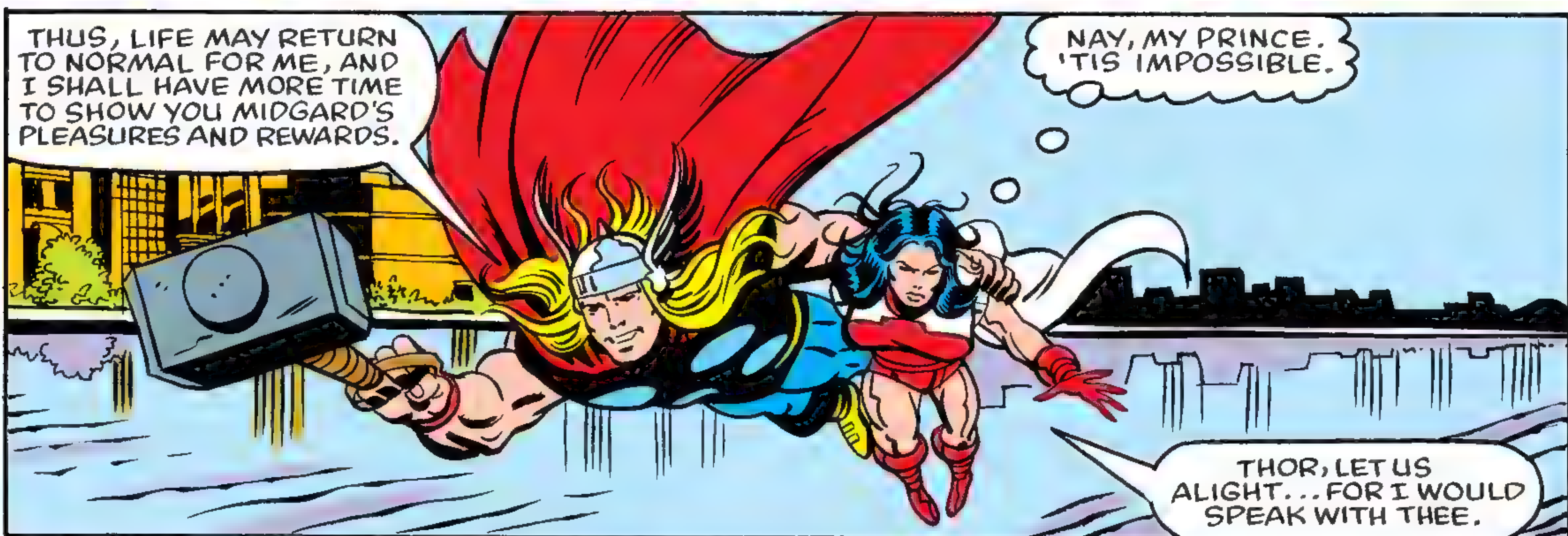
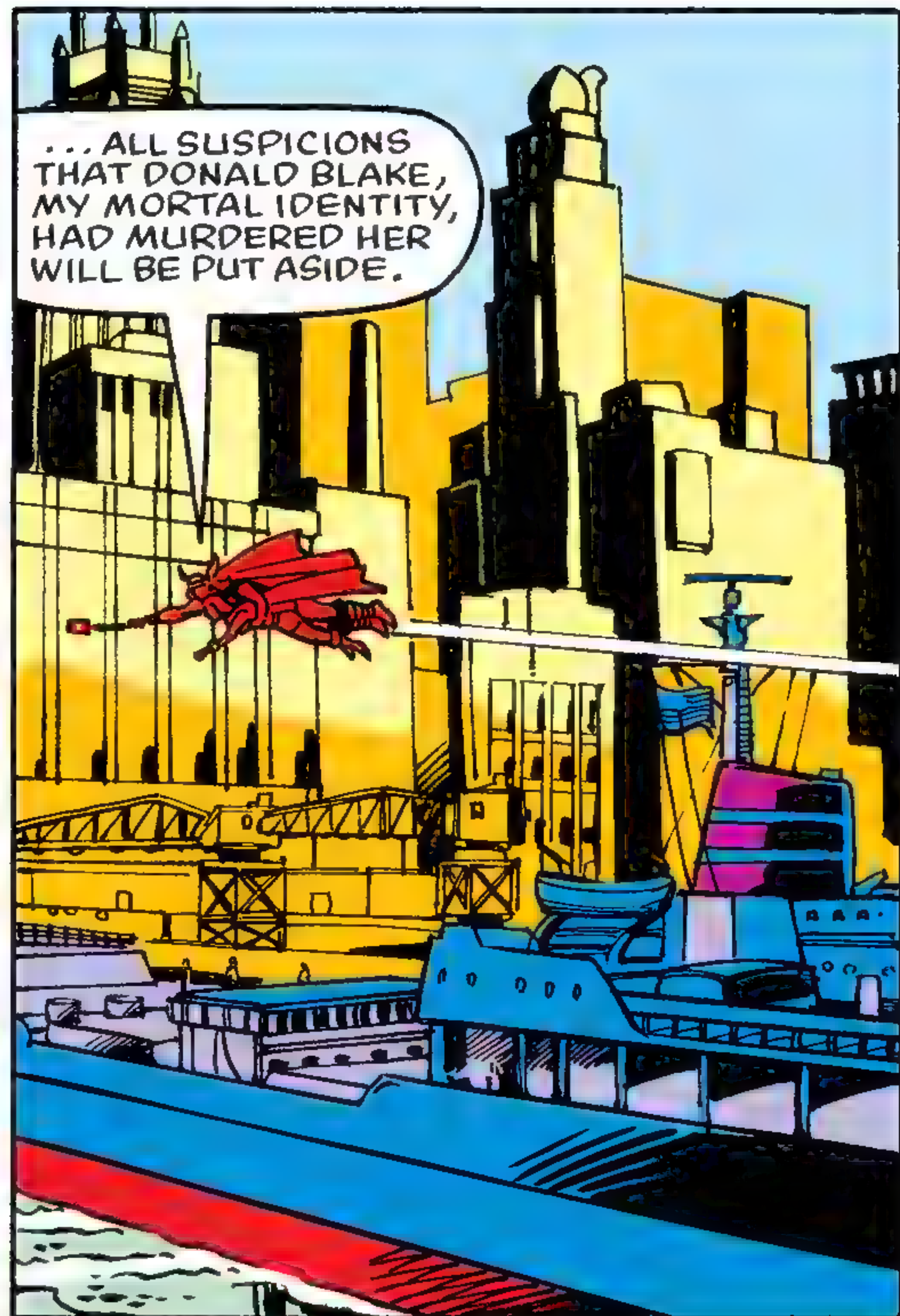
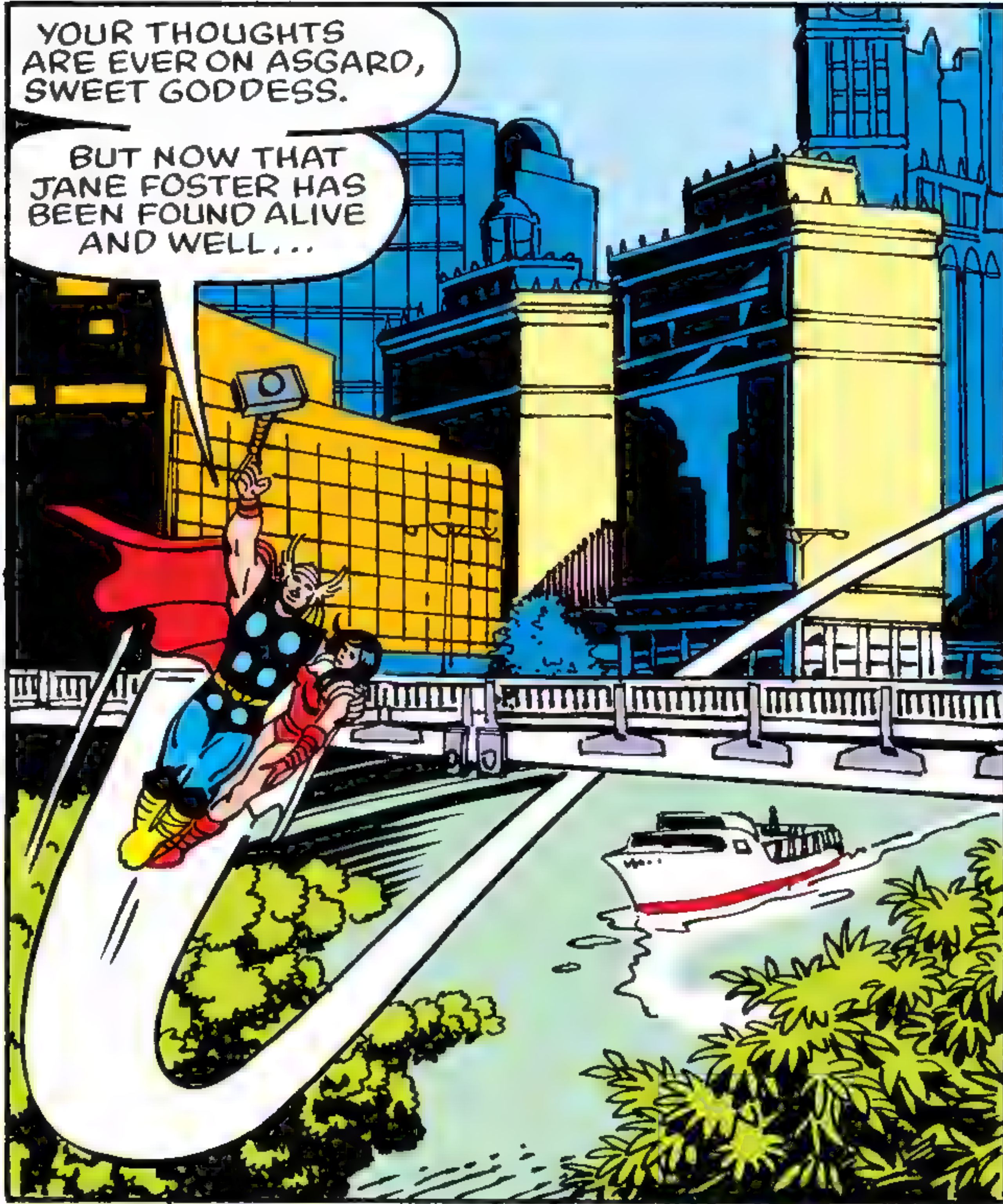
BUT IN THE AQUARIUM'S
BOILER ROOM, AND CERTAINLY
NOT ON TODAY'S SCHEDULE...

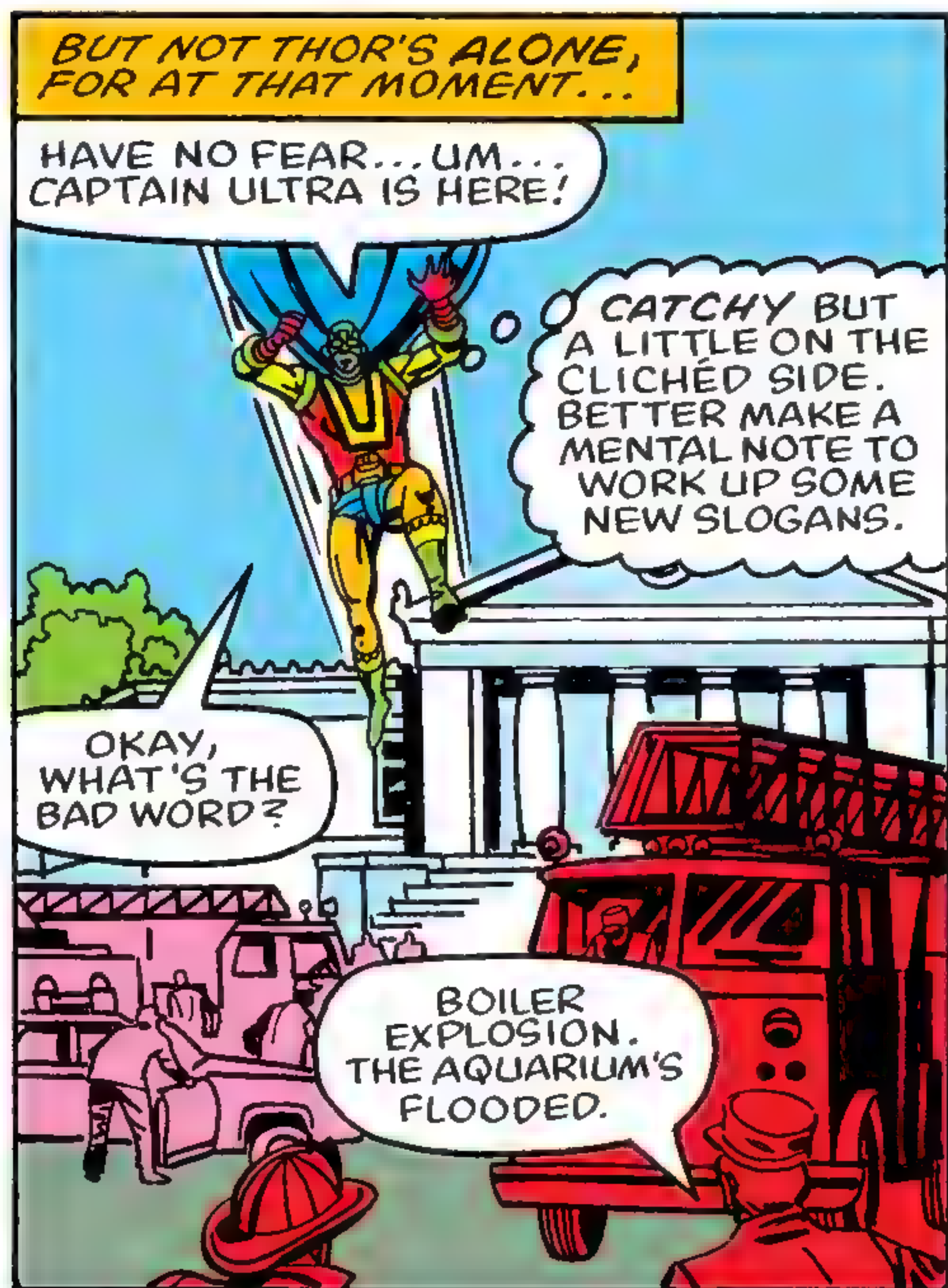
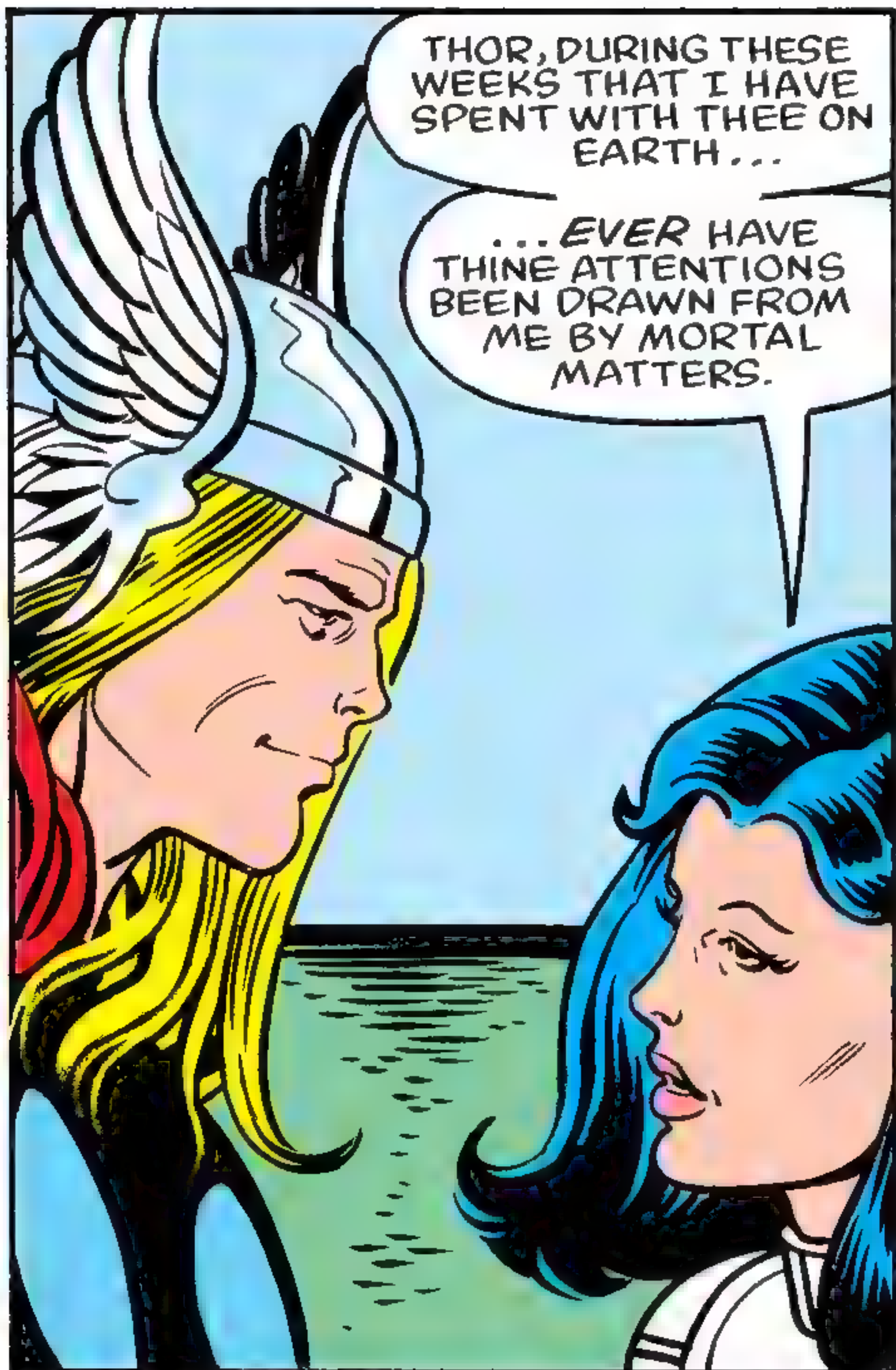


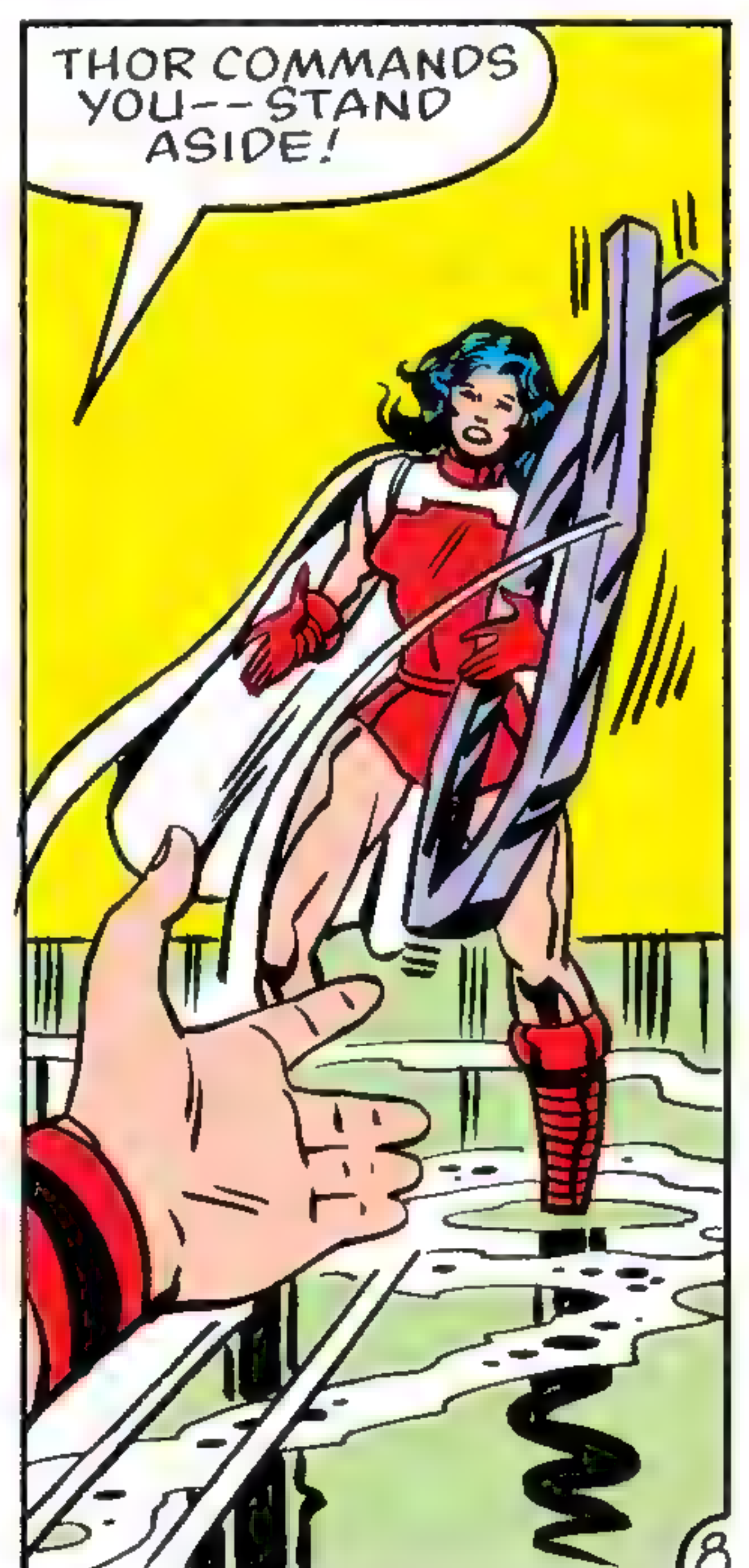
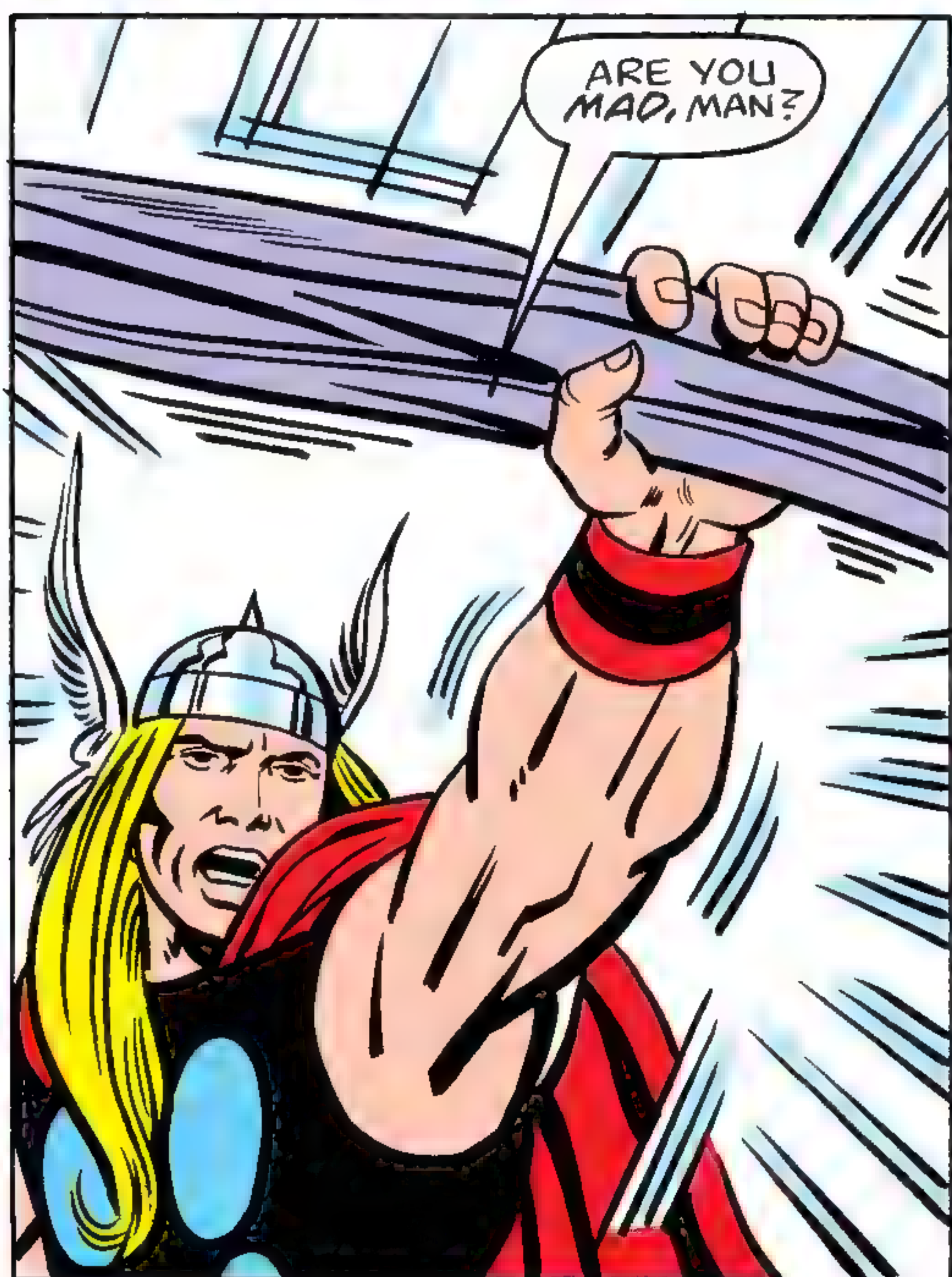
... A HIGH-
PRESSURE JET
OIL BURNER
BEGINS TO RUMBLE
THREATENINGLY.

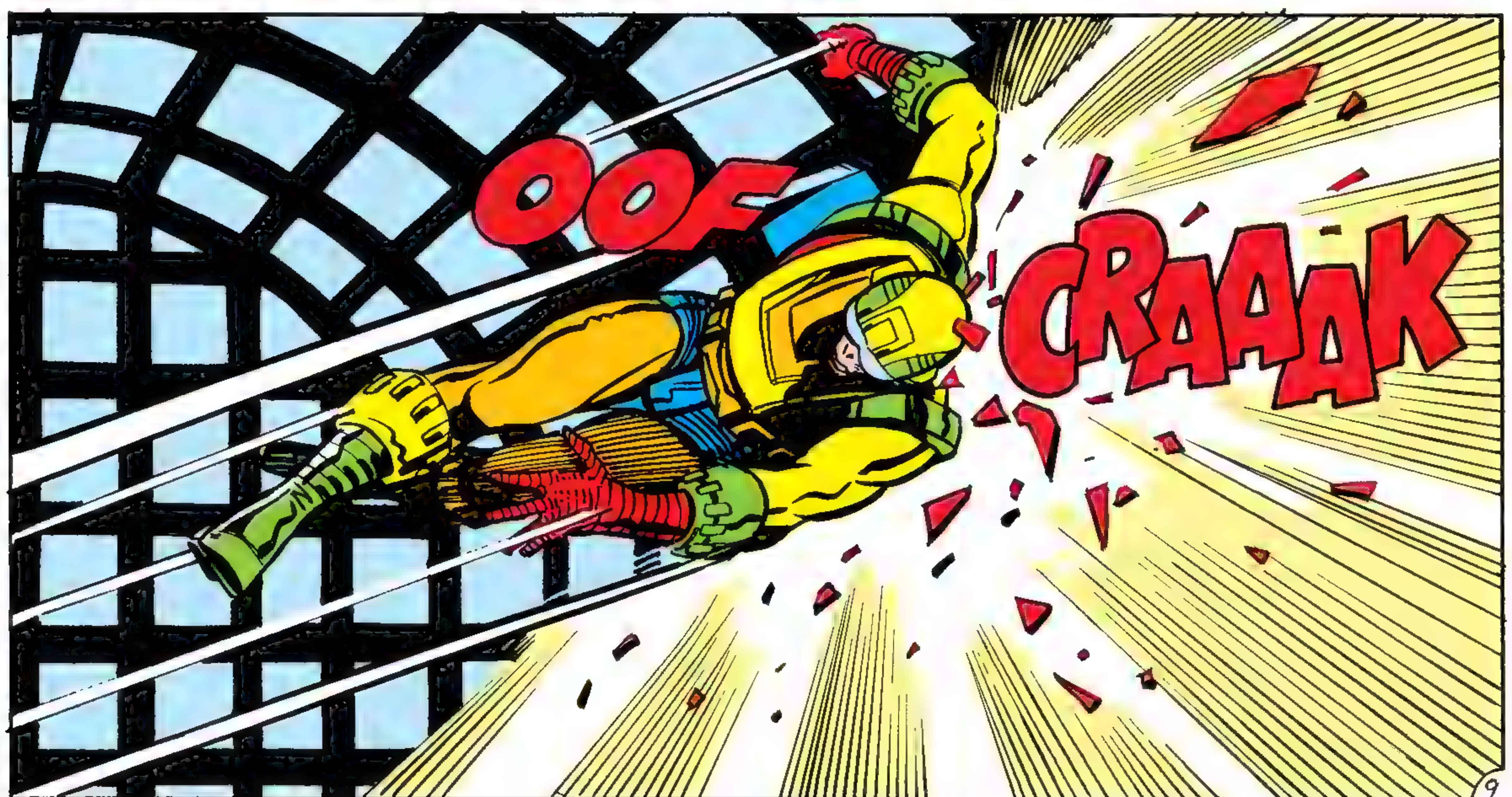
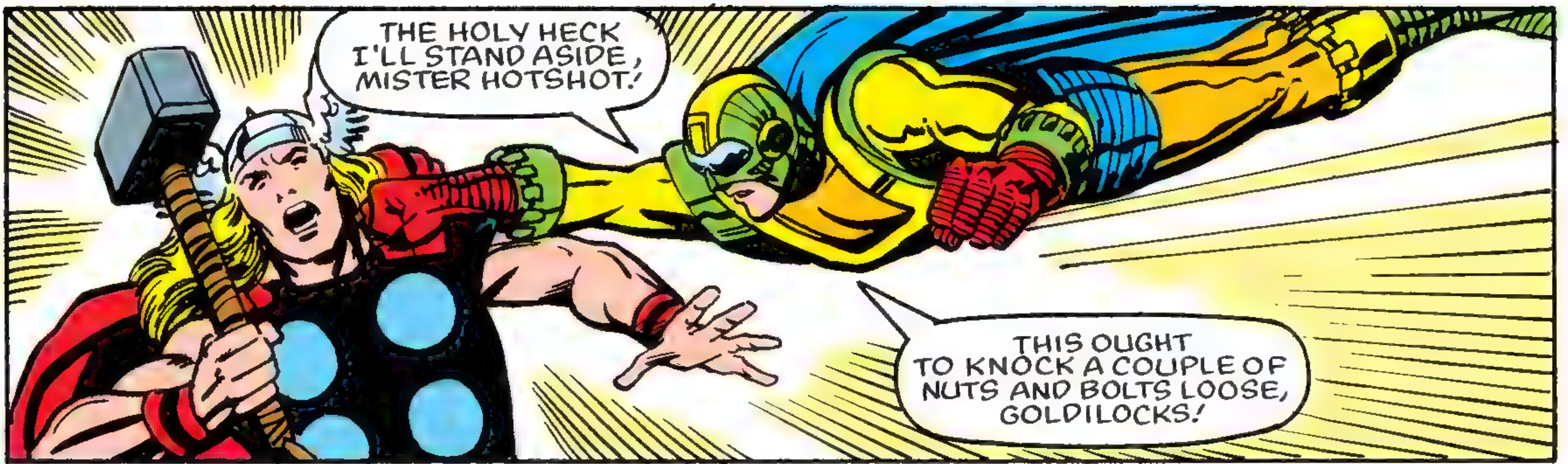


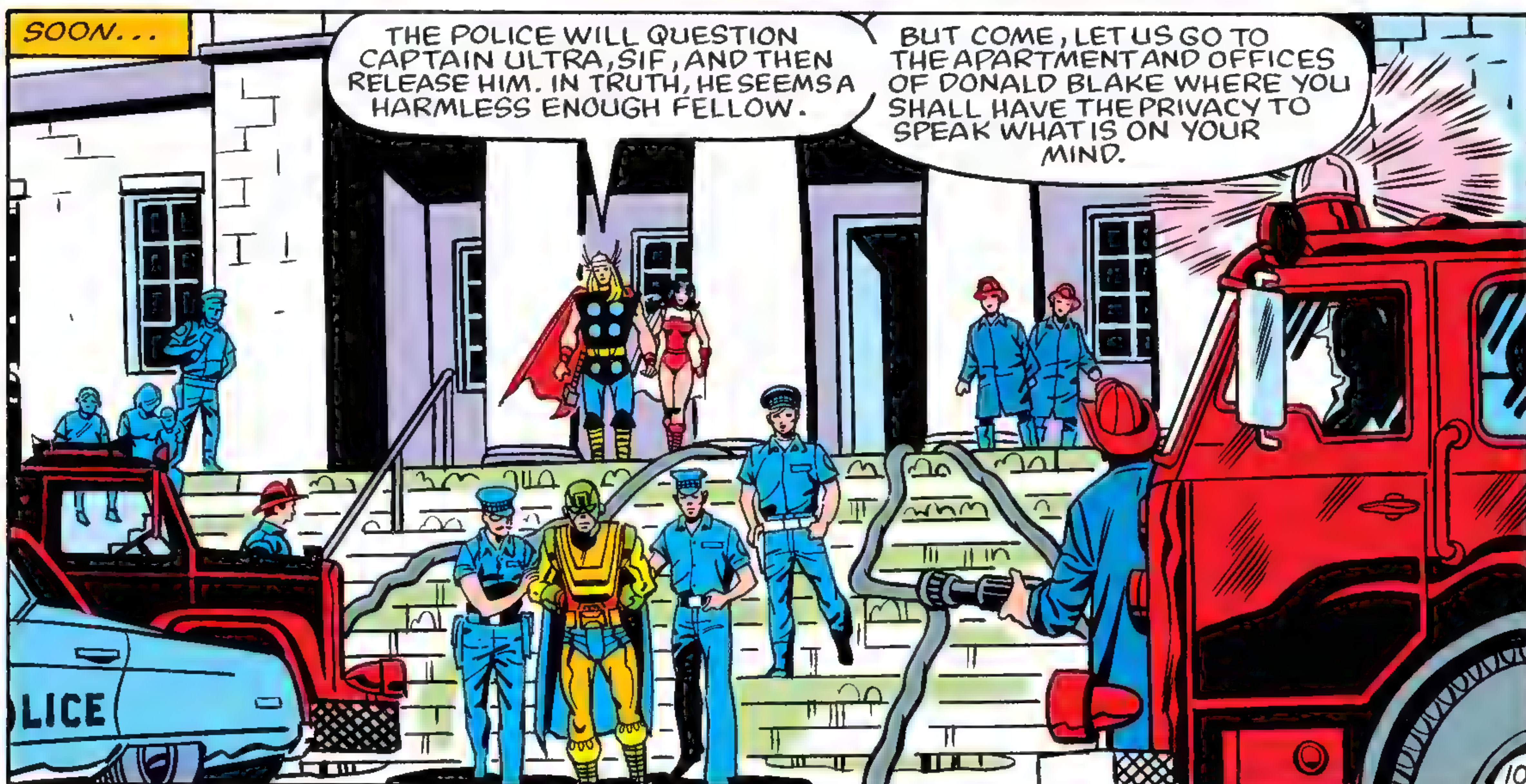
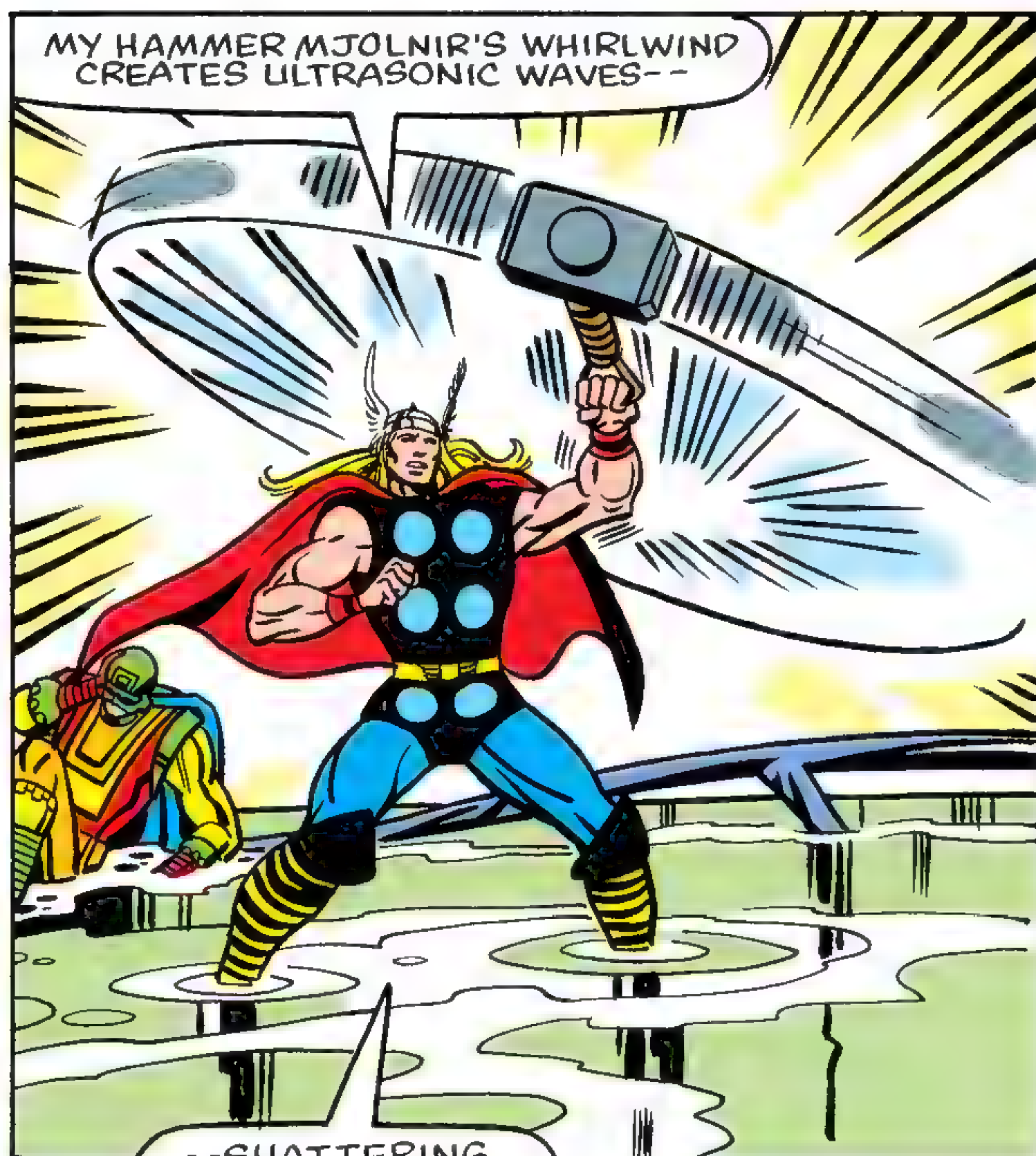


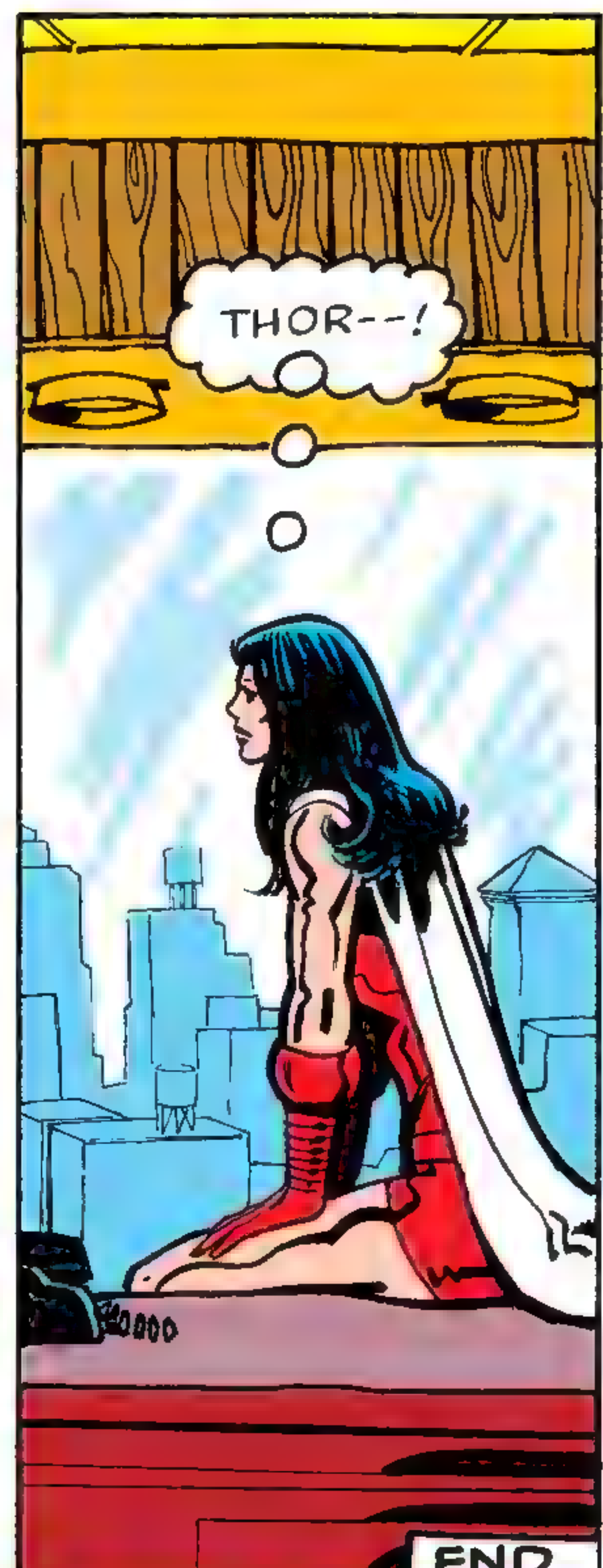
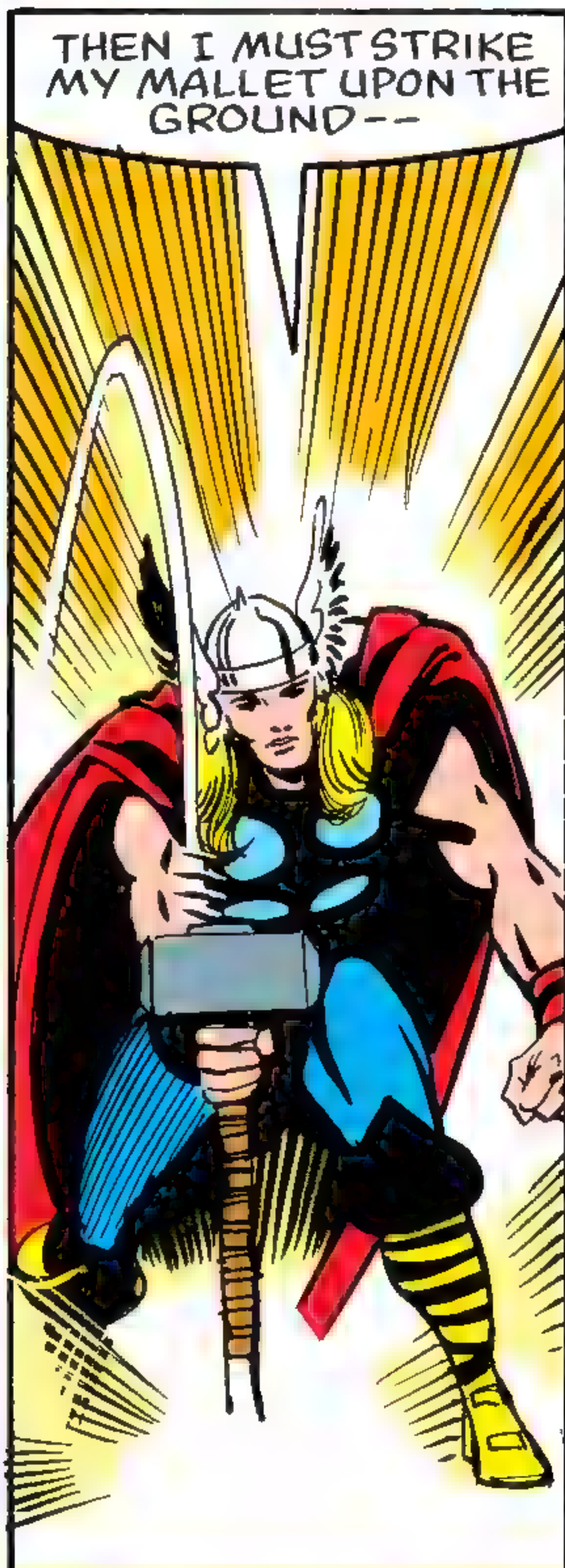
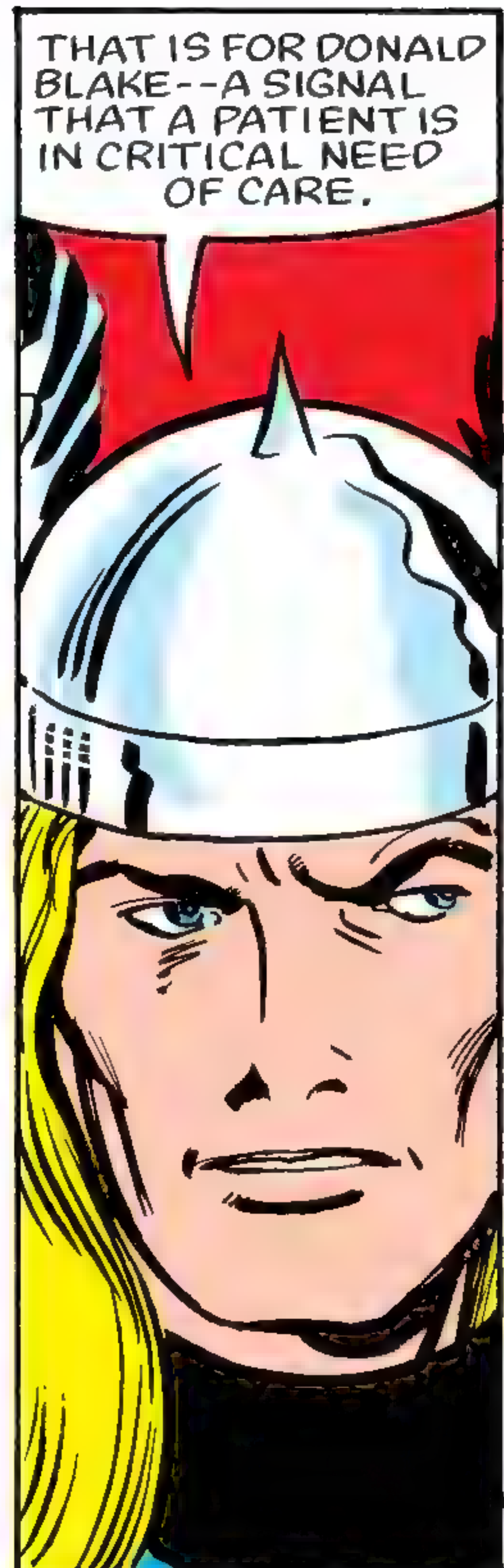












END.

COMING SOON... A THOR EPIC LIKE NO OTHER UNFOLDS IN THE

THOR GRAPHIC NOVEL!

WATCH FOR IT!

ETERNAL ASGARD!

BEYOND THE FARTHEST
EXPANSE OF OUR UNIVERSE
STANDS THE SILVER-ROOFED
AND GOLDEN-DOMED HOME
OF THE LEGENDARY NORSE
GODS.

A DISTANT MUSIC!

CELESTIAL ASGARD, WHOSE EMERALD SWORD
AND GREEN WOODS PLAY HOST THIS MOMENT
TO SIF, GLITTERING GODDESS OF THE HUNT...

HO, MILADY,
THE BOAR'S
AT BAY!

AND MY
SHAFT'S TO
THE READY,
HUNTSMAN
BYGVIR.

RRUF

RRUF
RUF

STAN LEE
PRESENTS

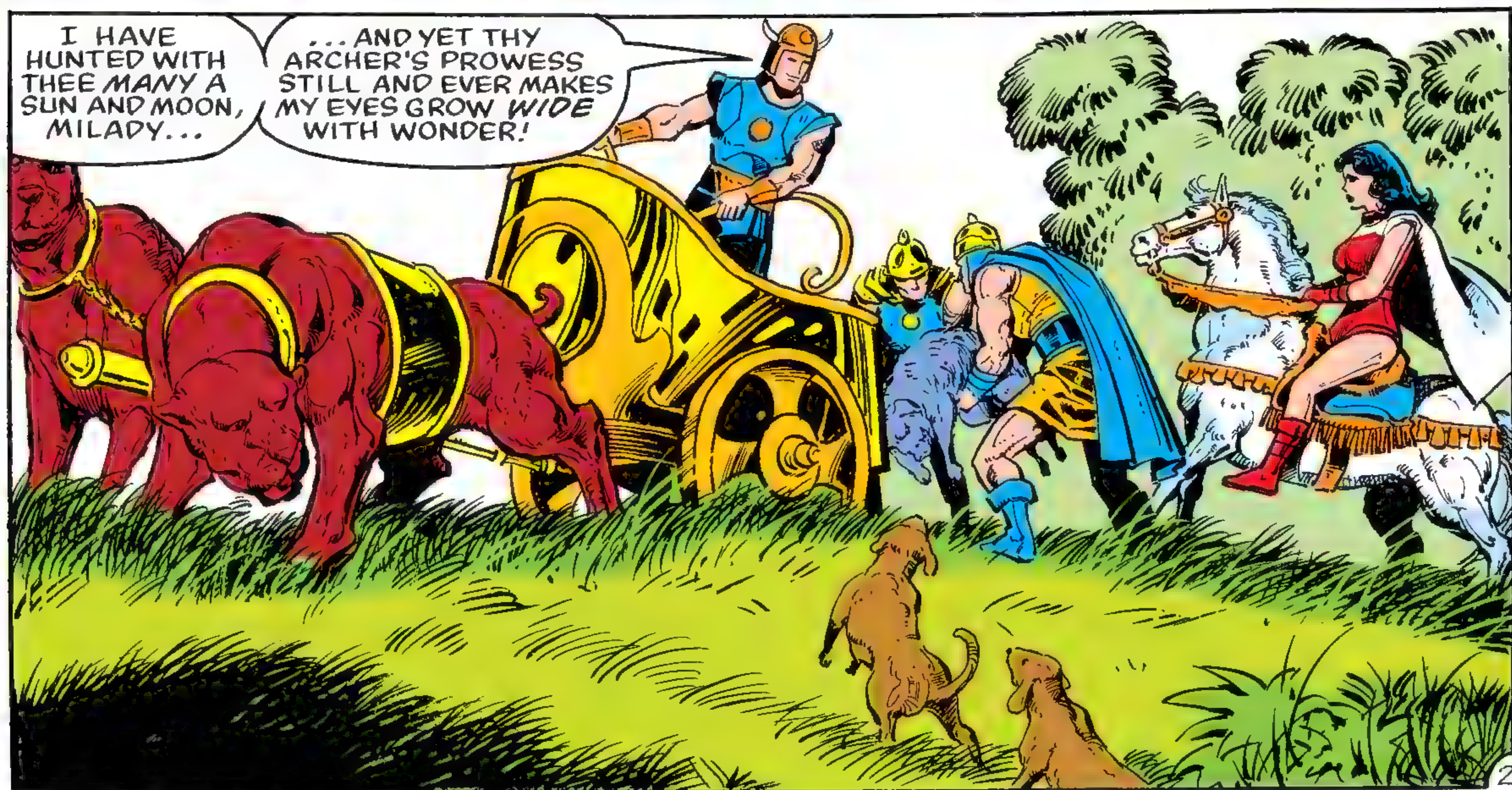
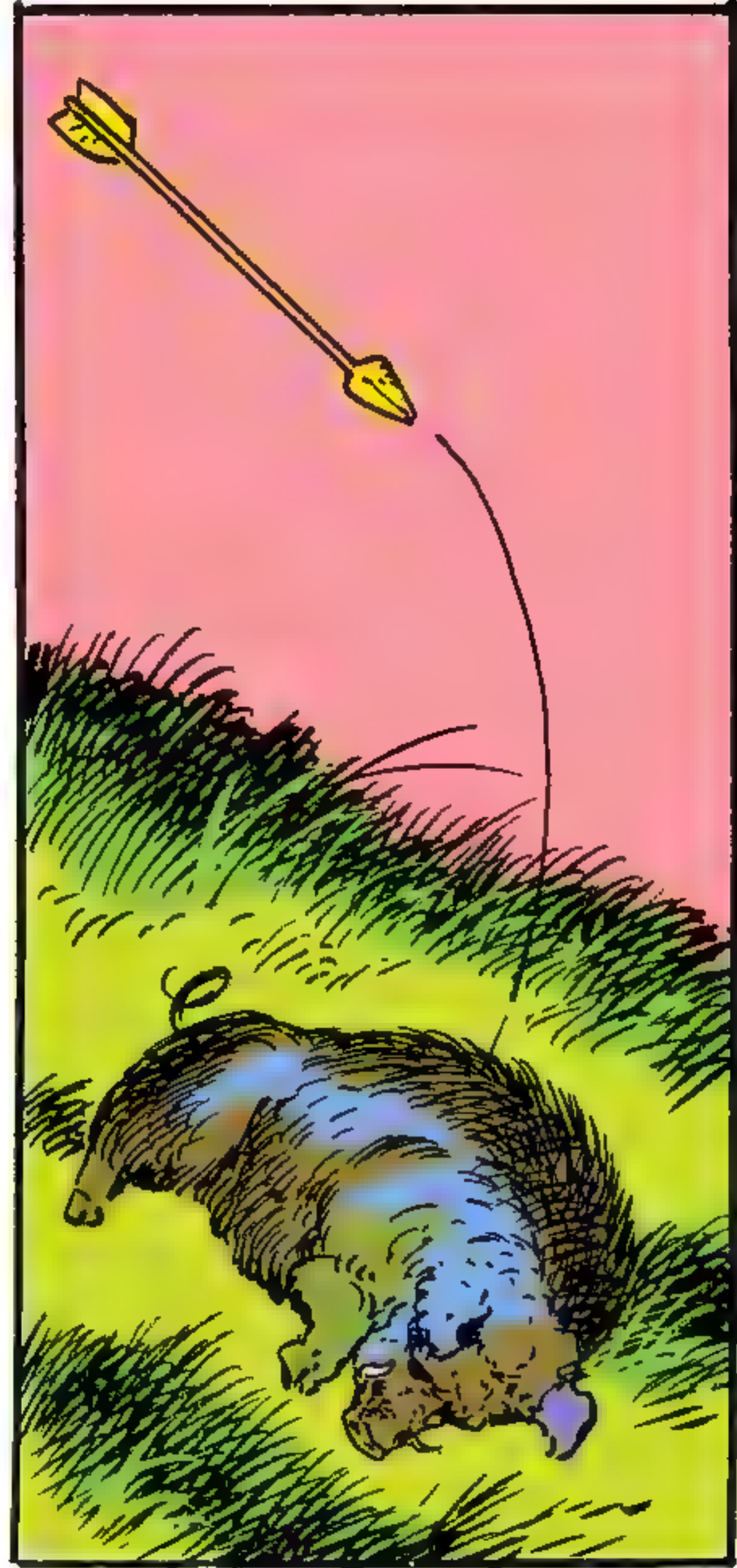
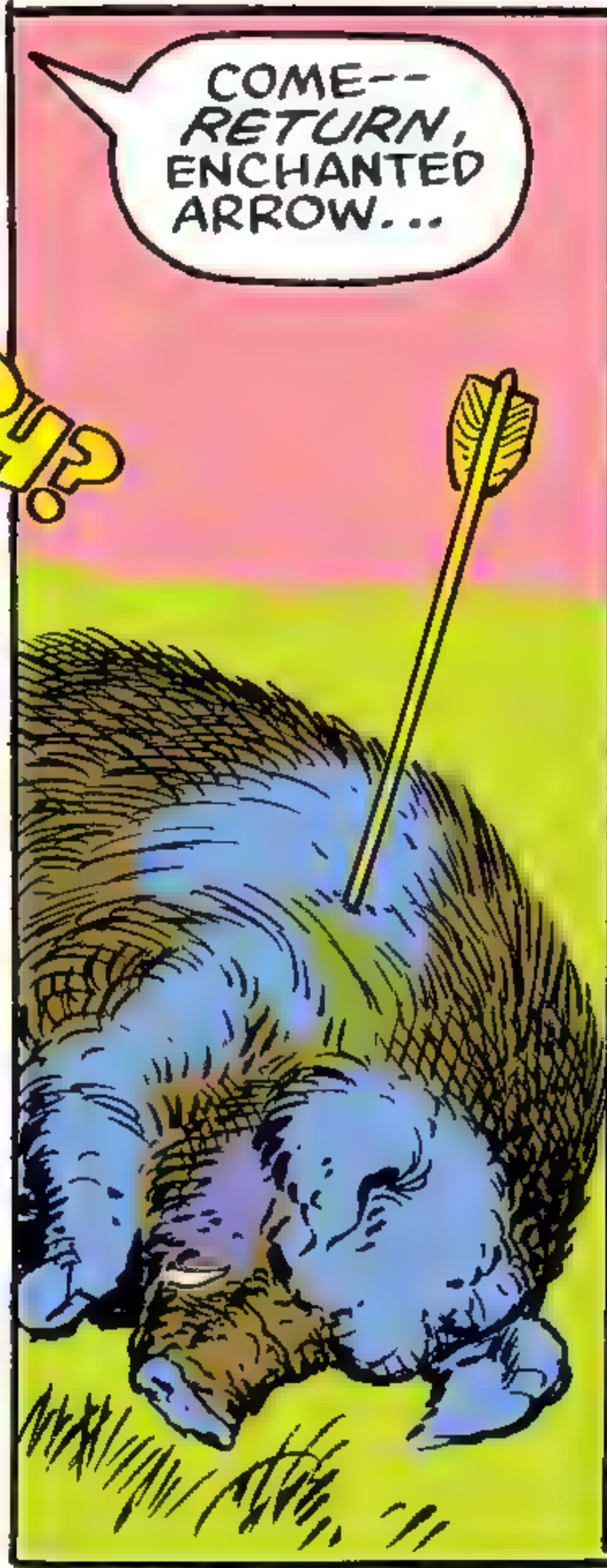
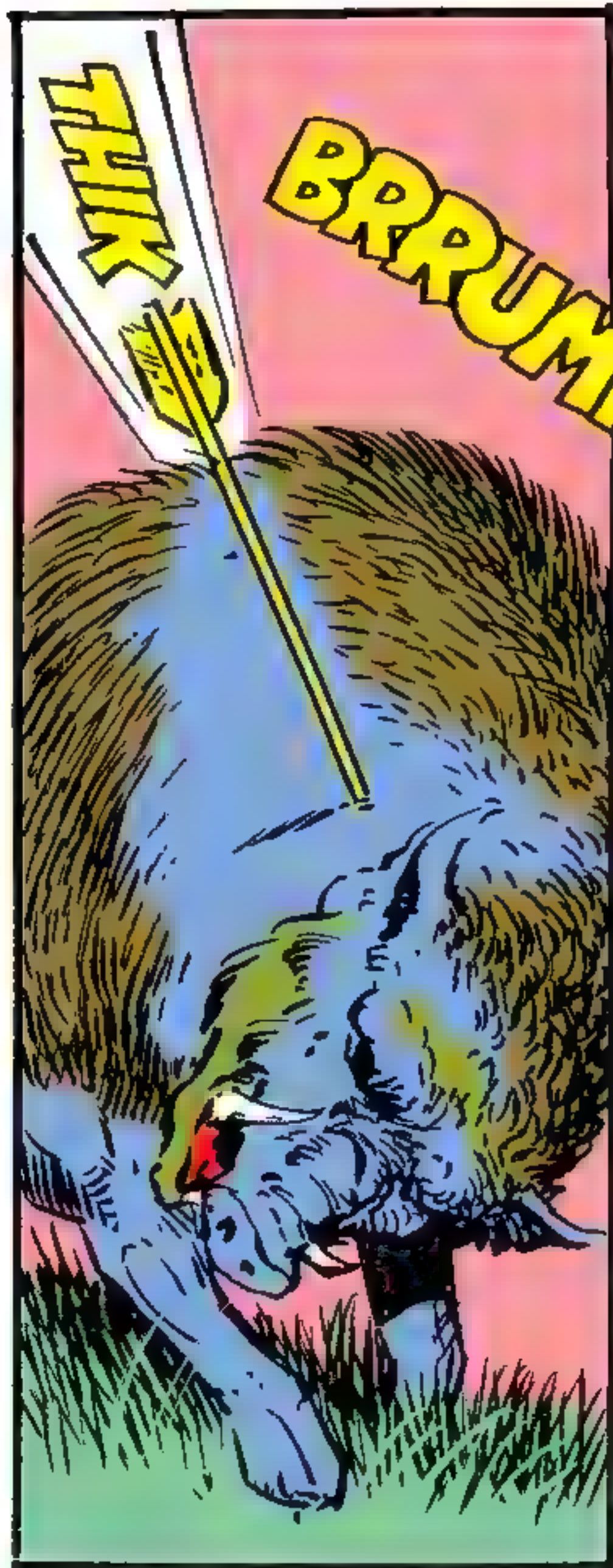
ALAN ZELENETZ
SCRIPTER

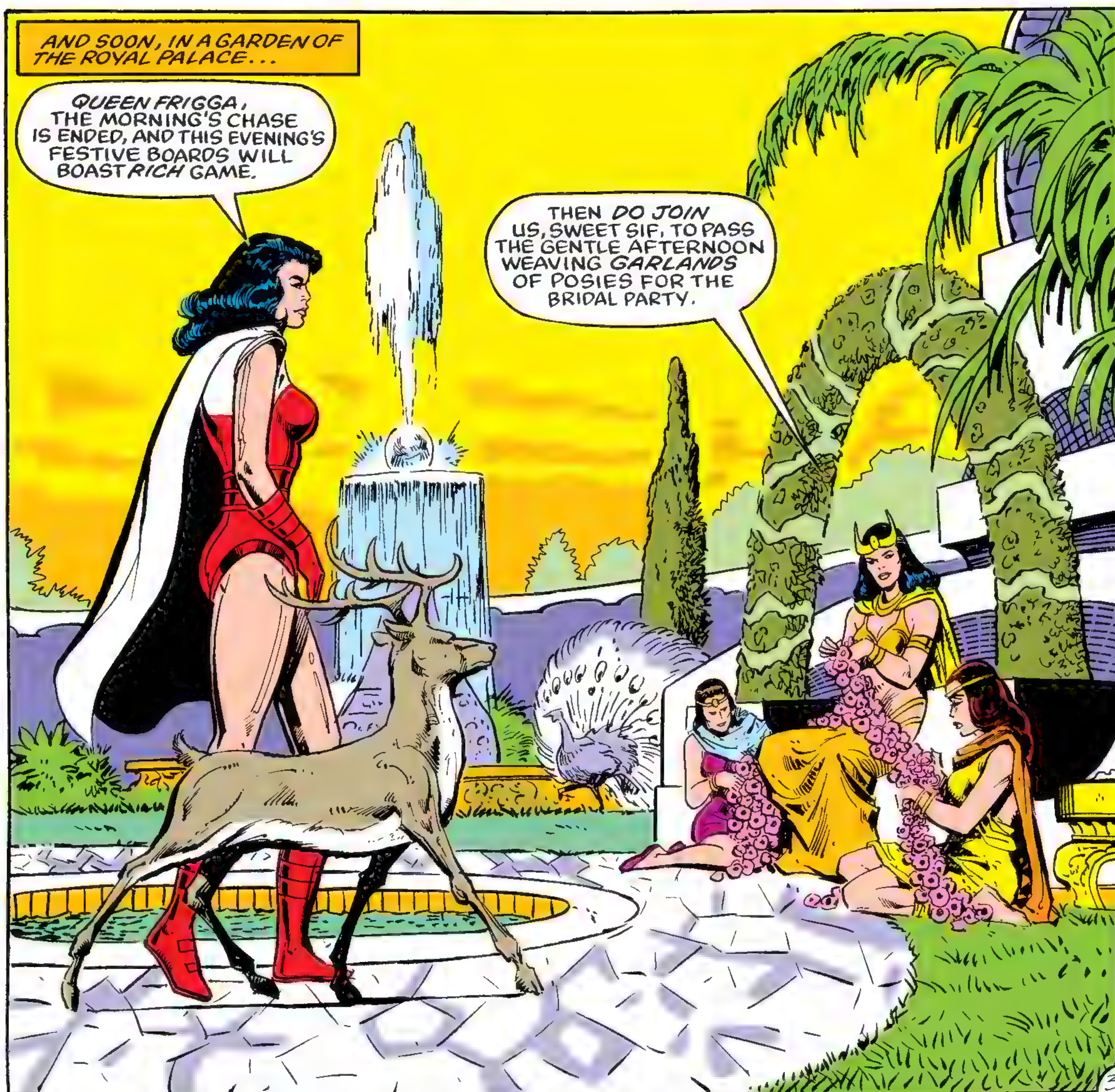
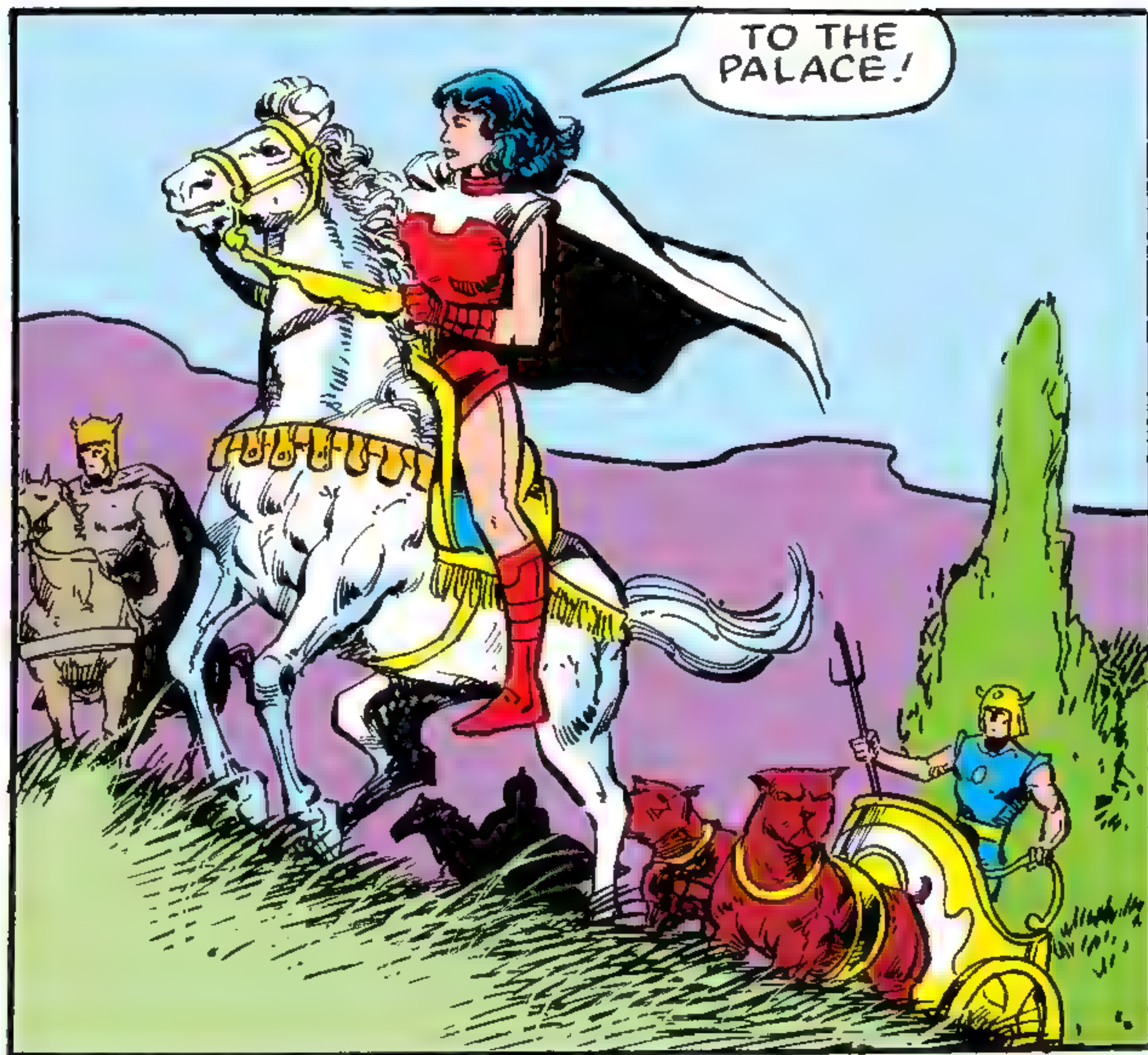
ERNIE CHAN
PENCILER

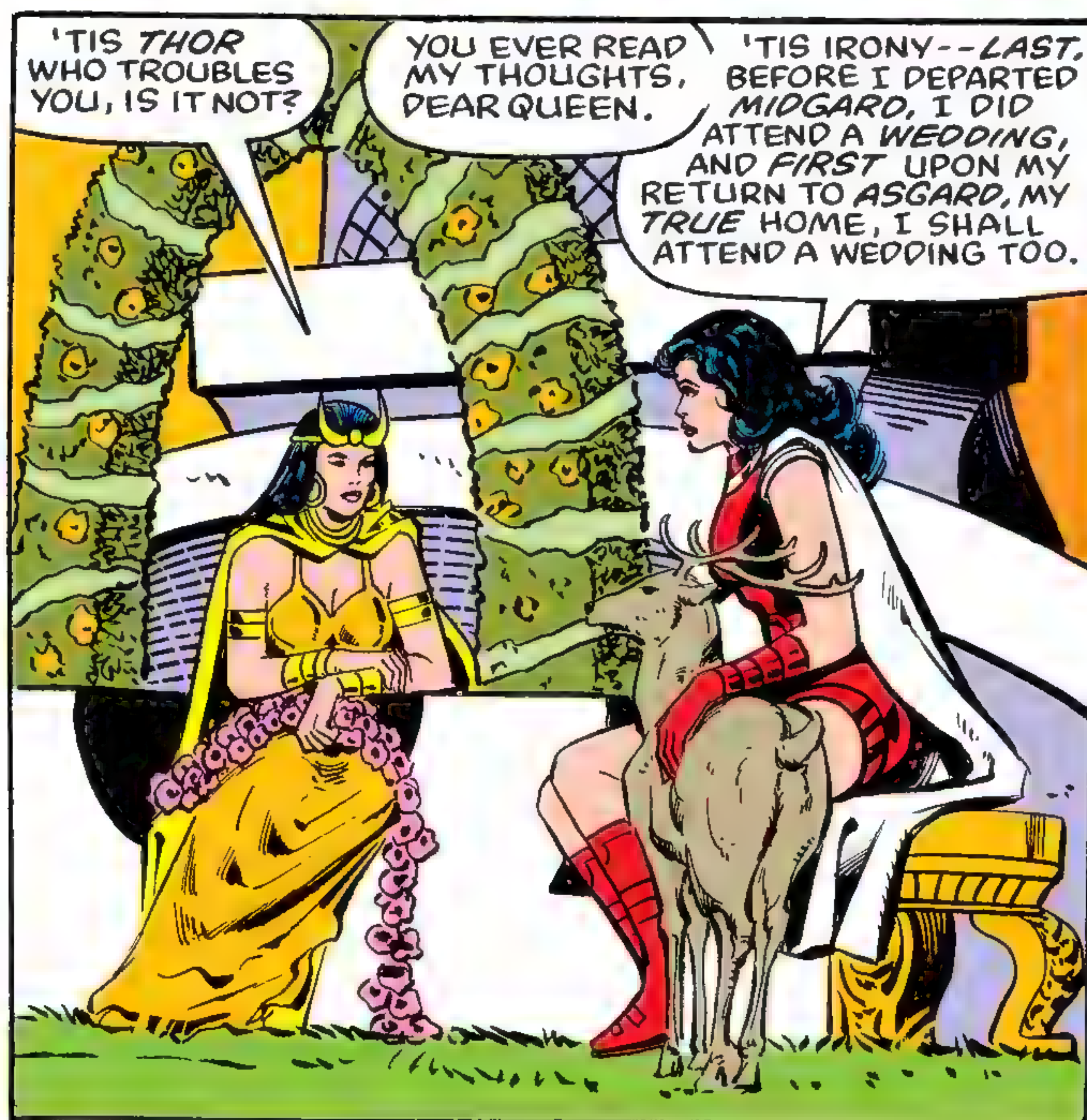
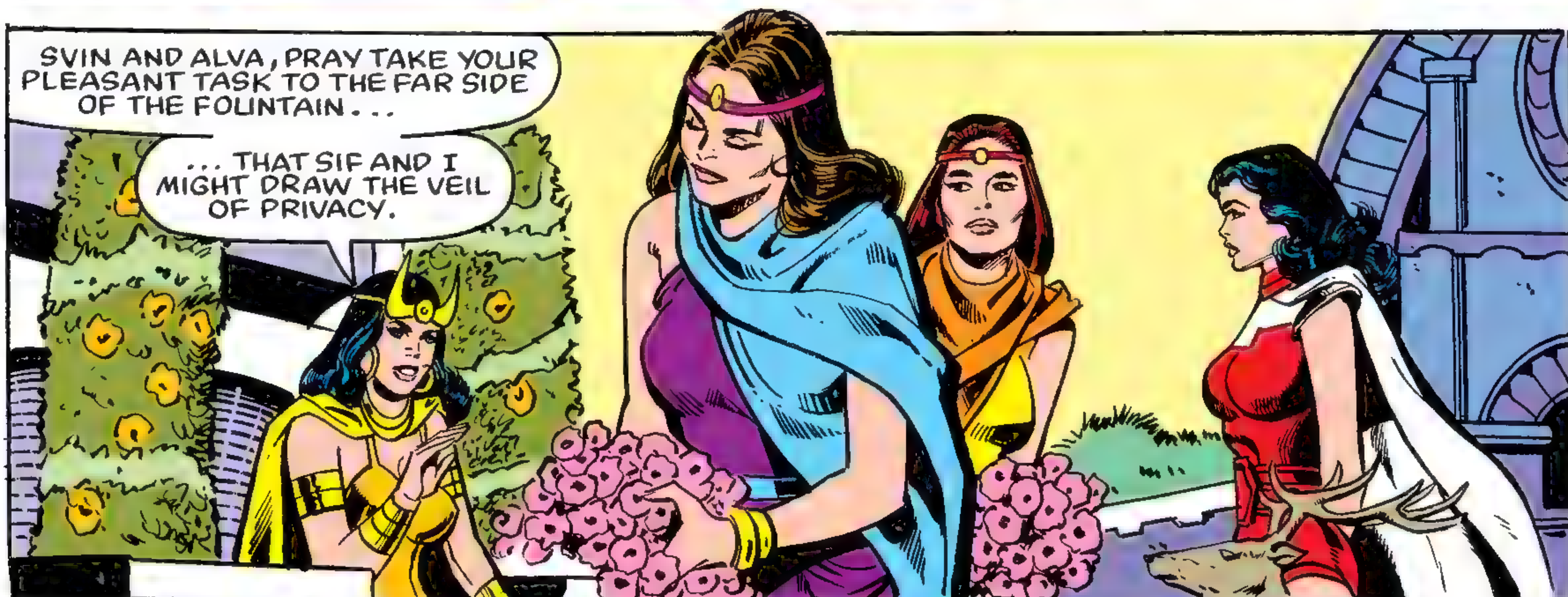
VINCE COLLETTA
INKER

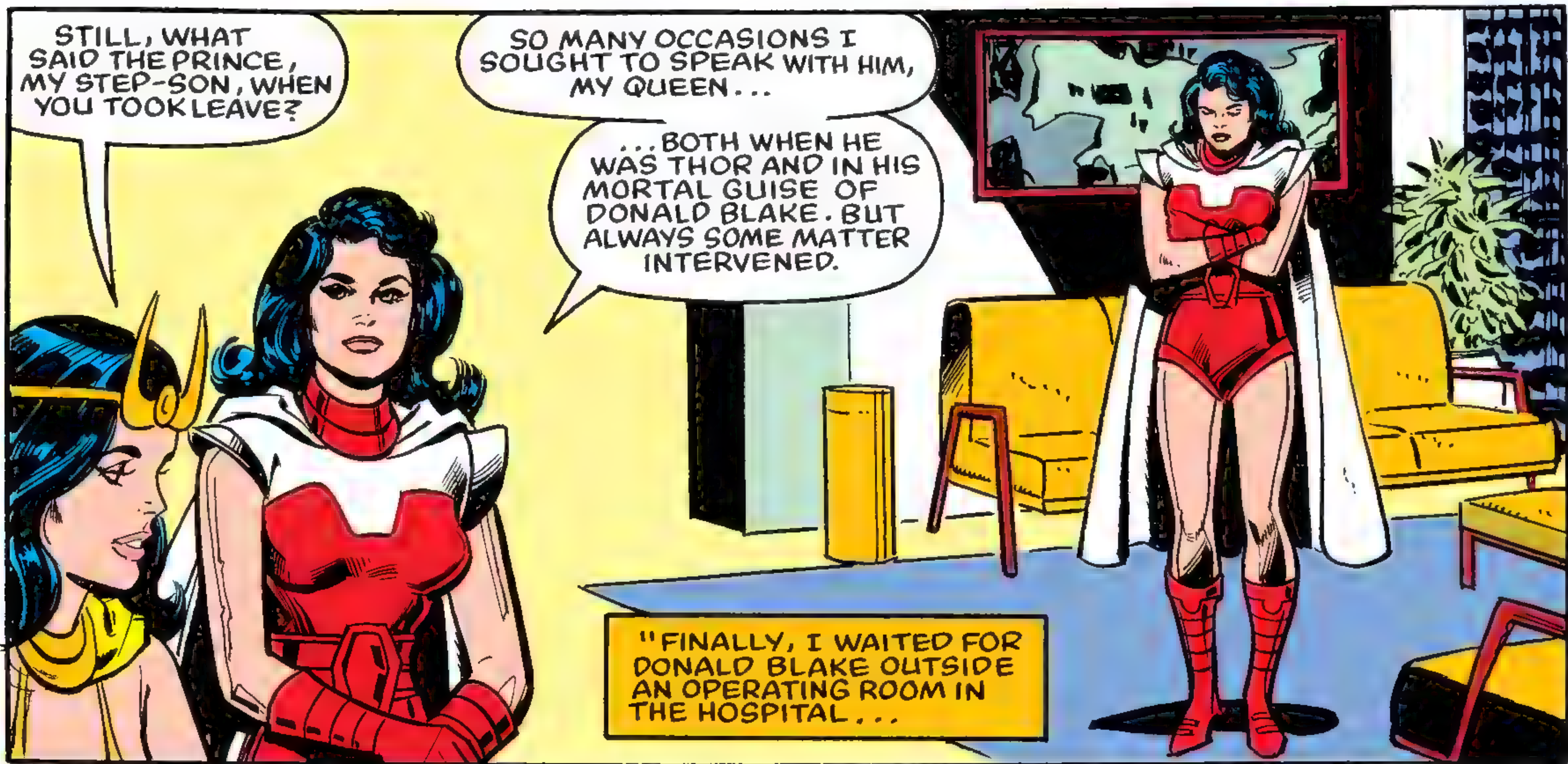
JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER

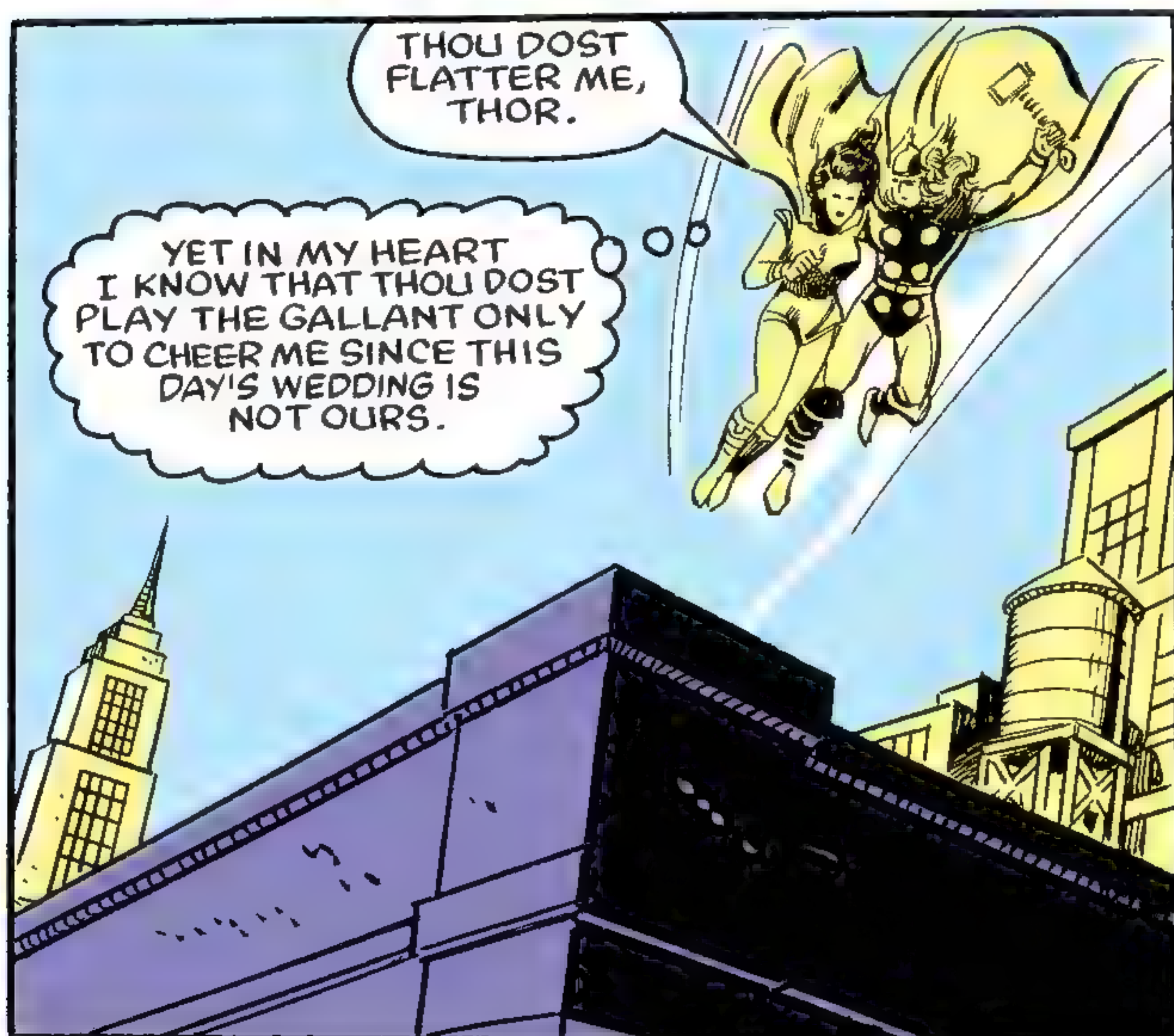
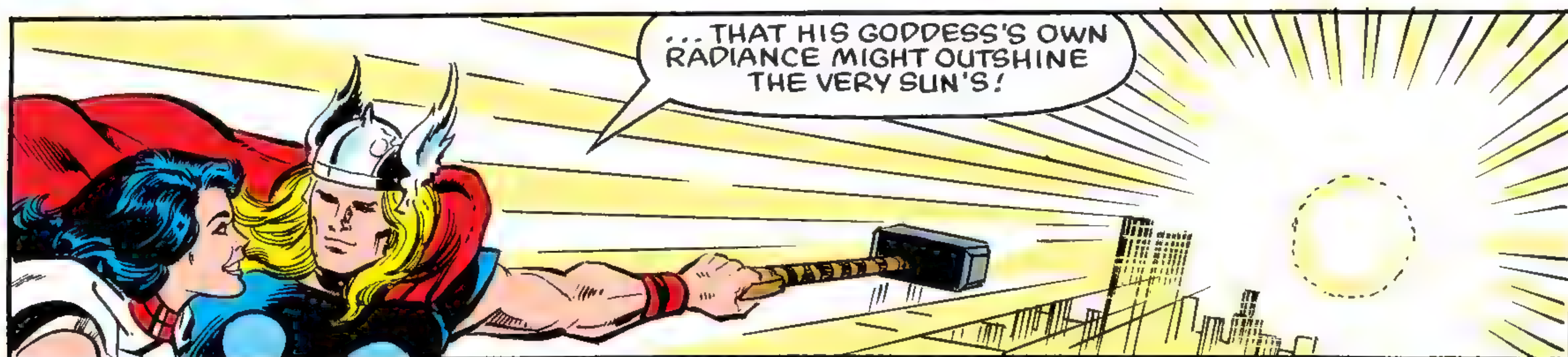
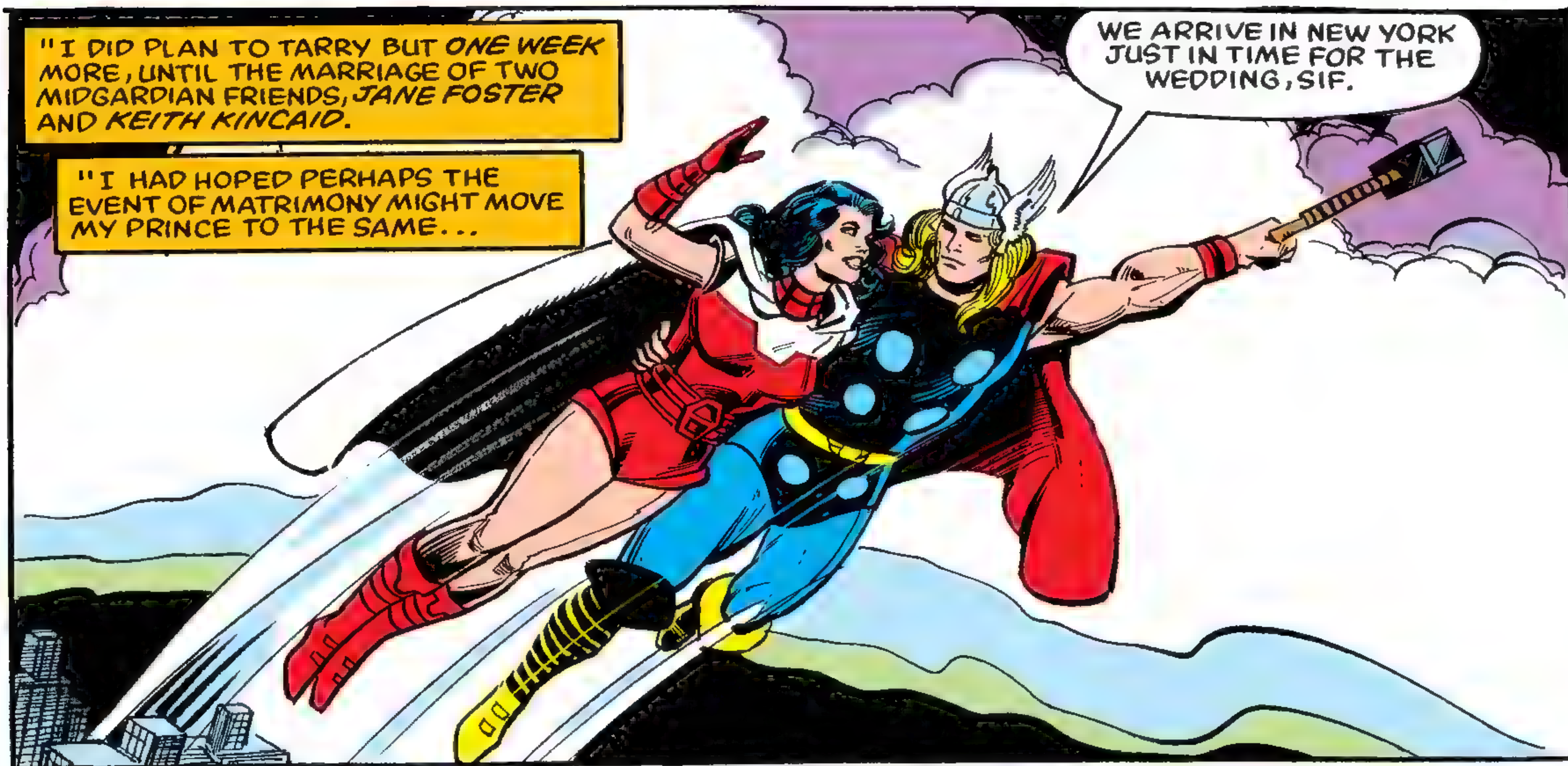
GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORIST

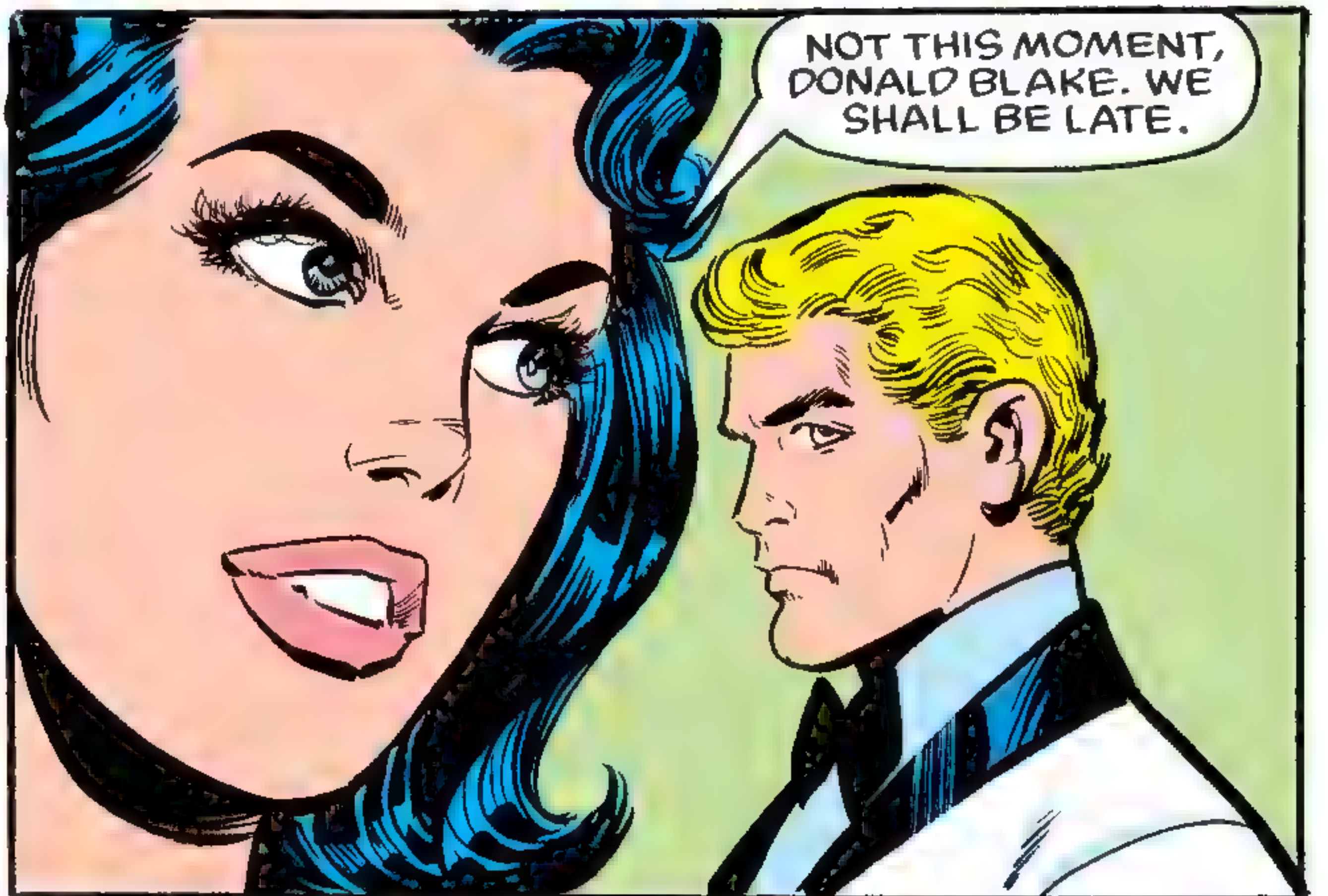
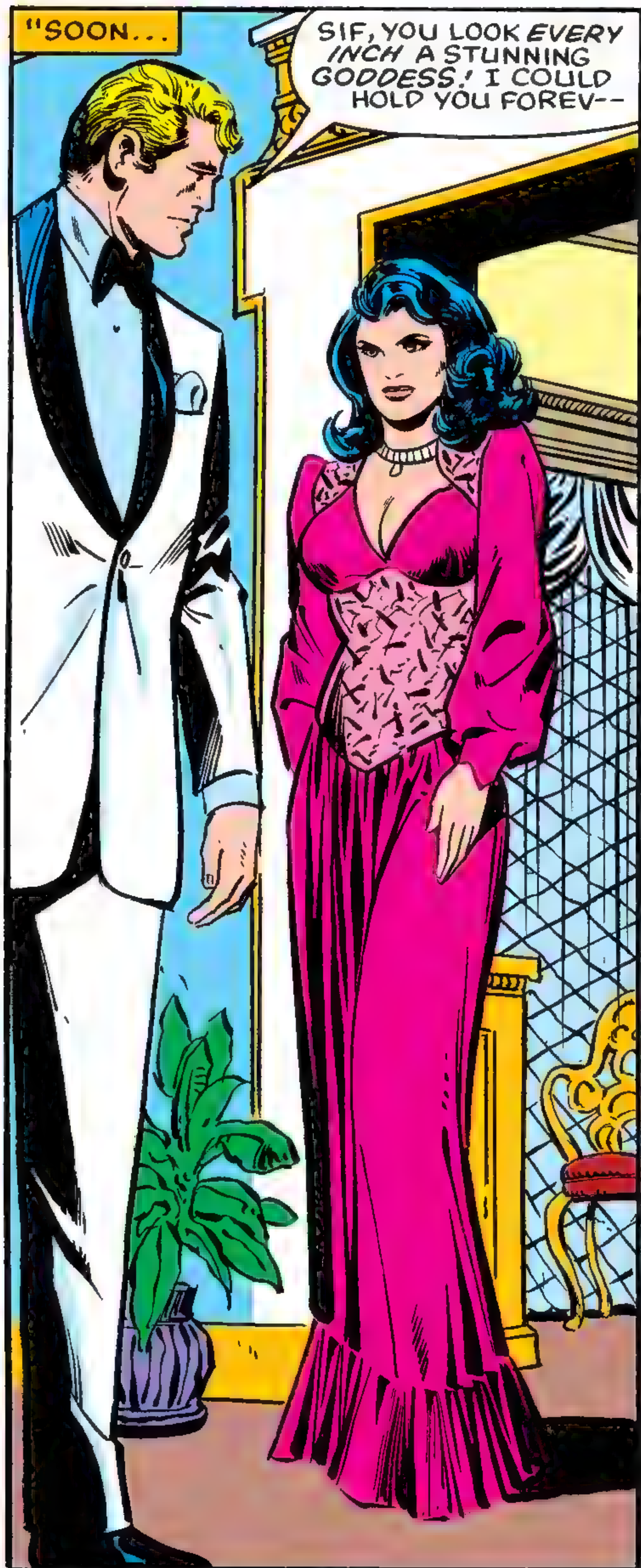
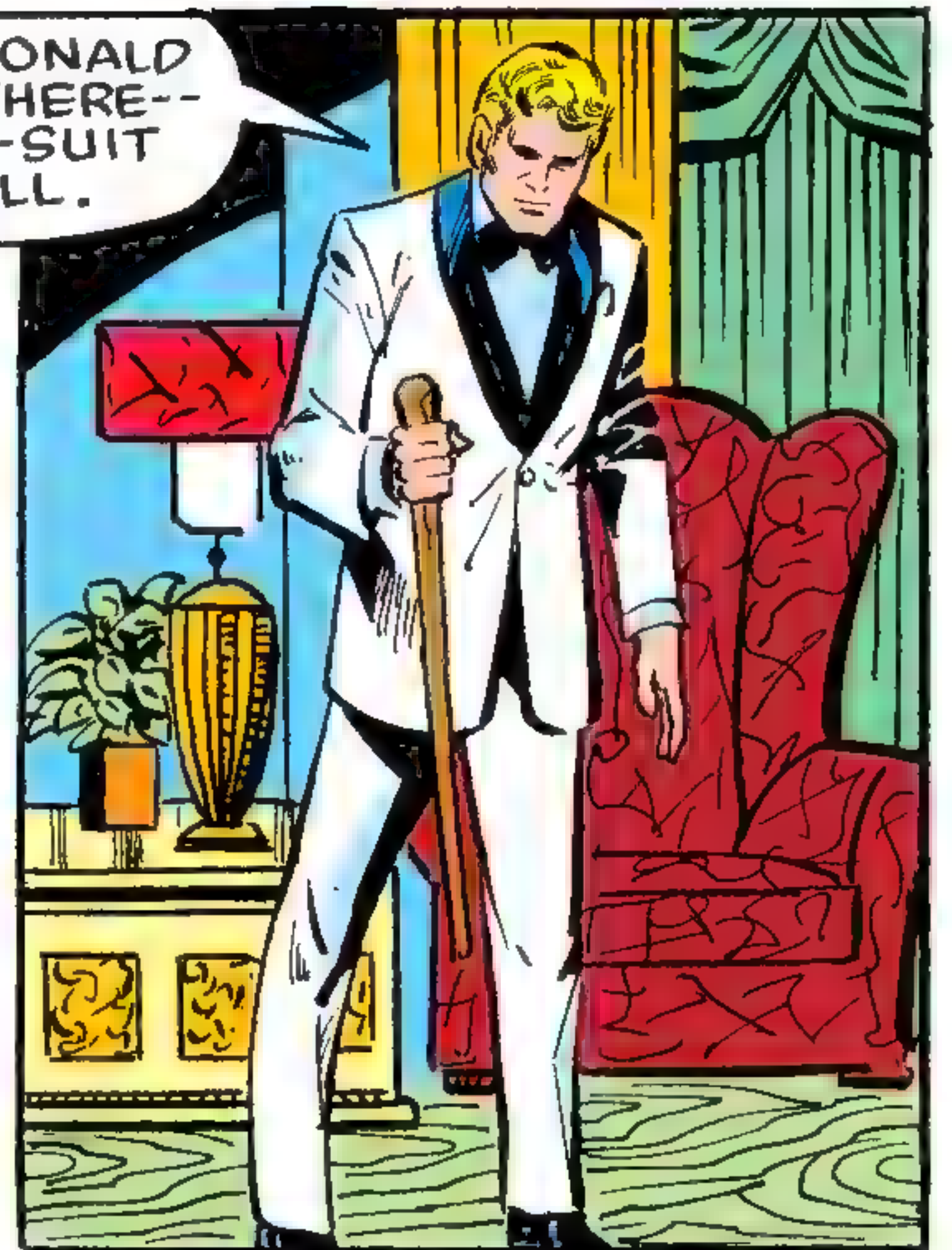
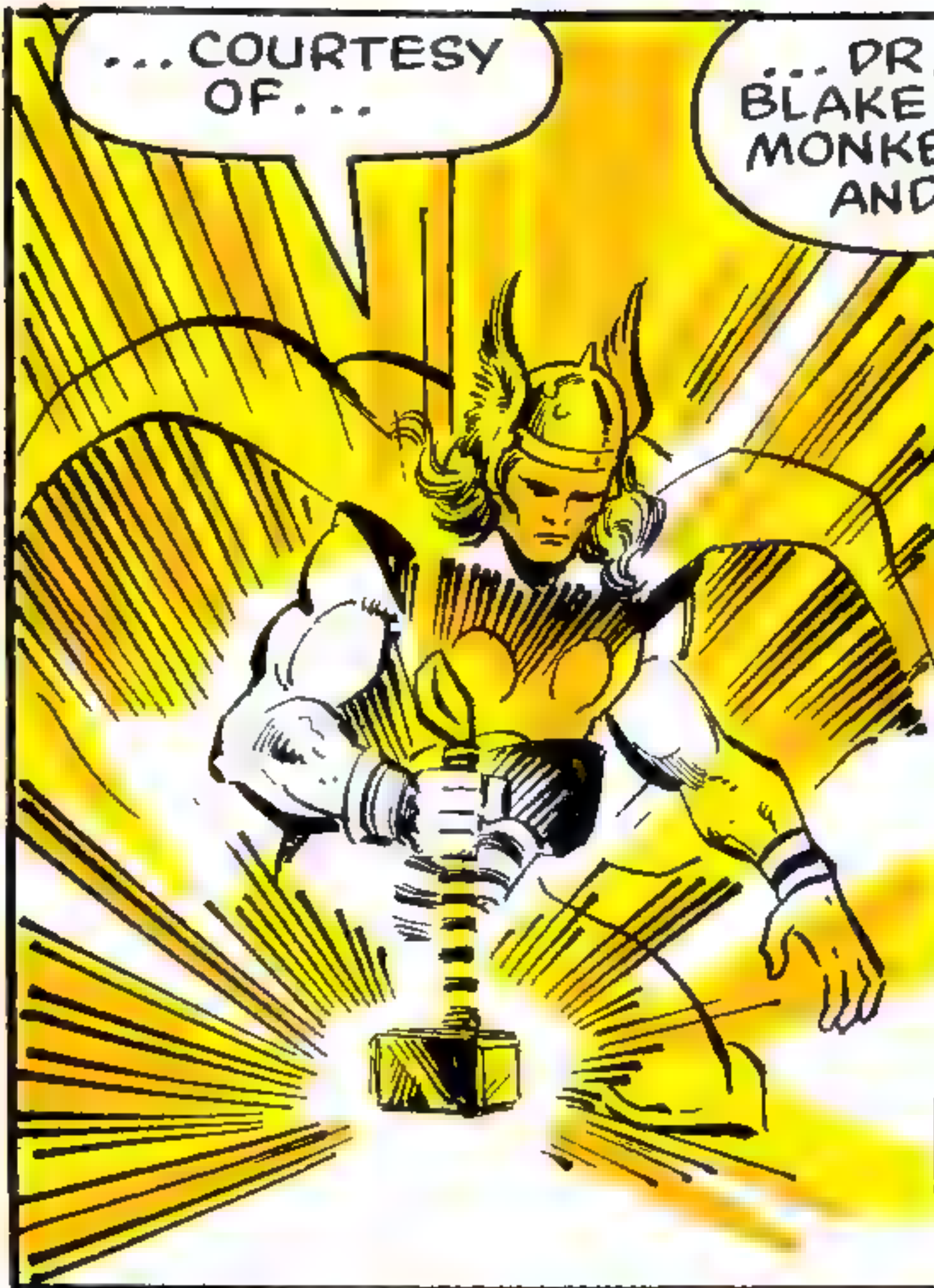


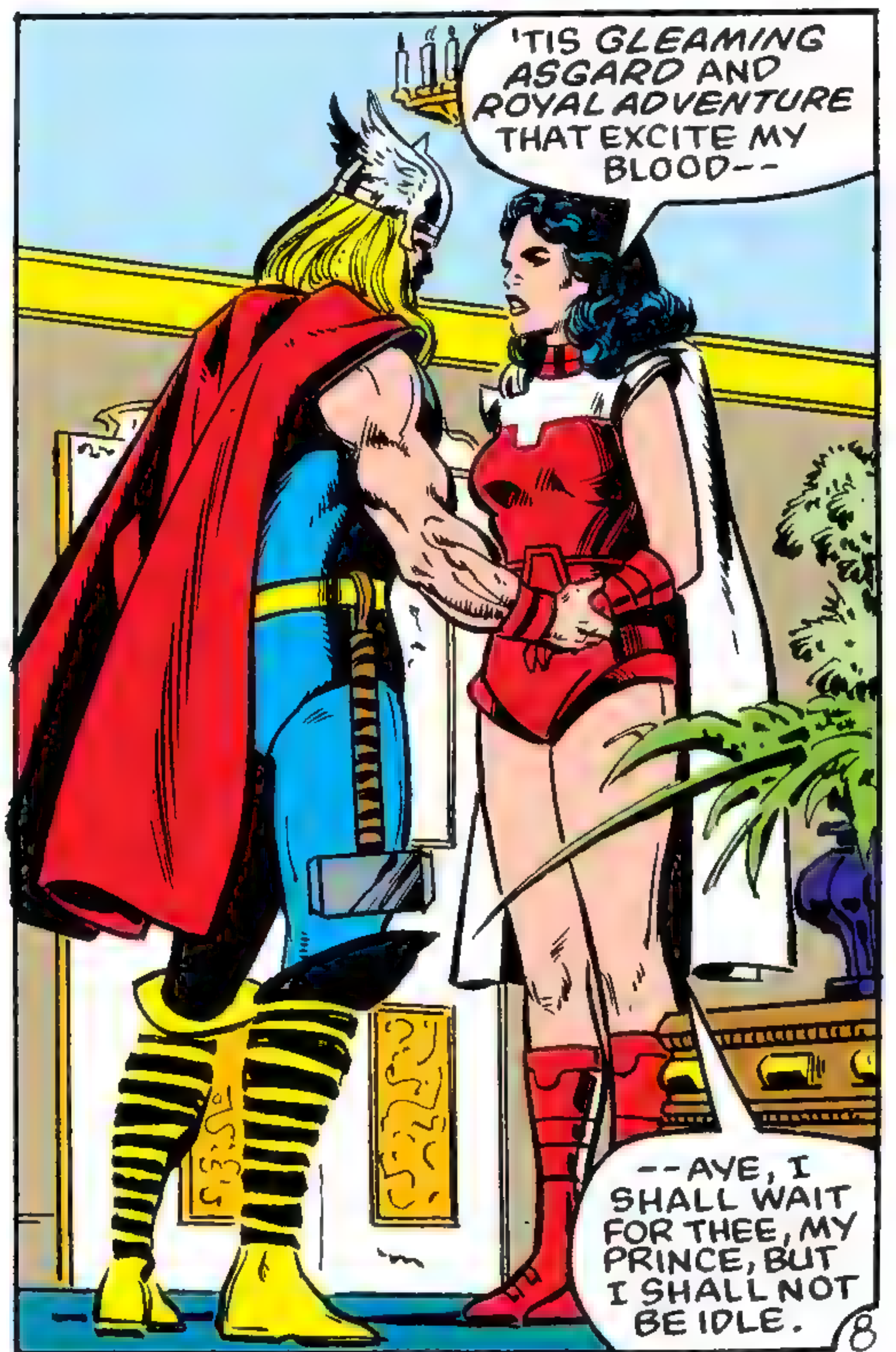
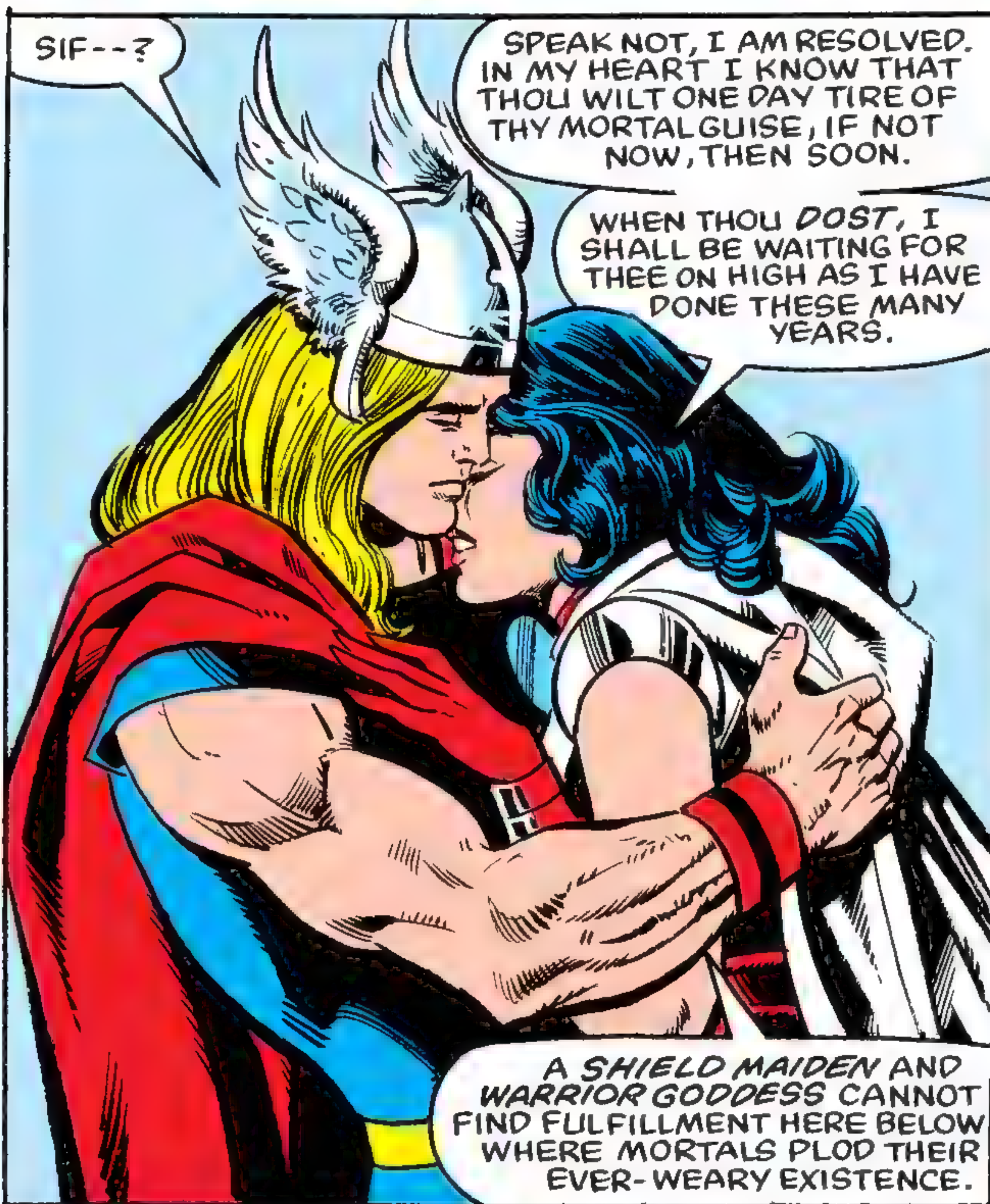
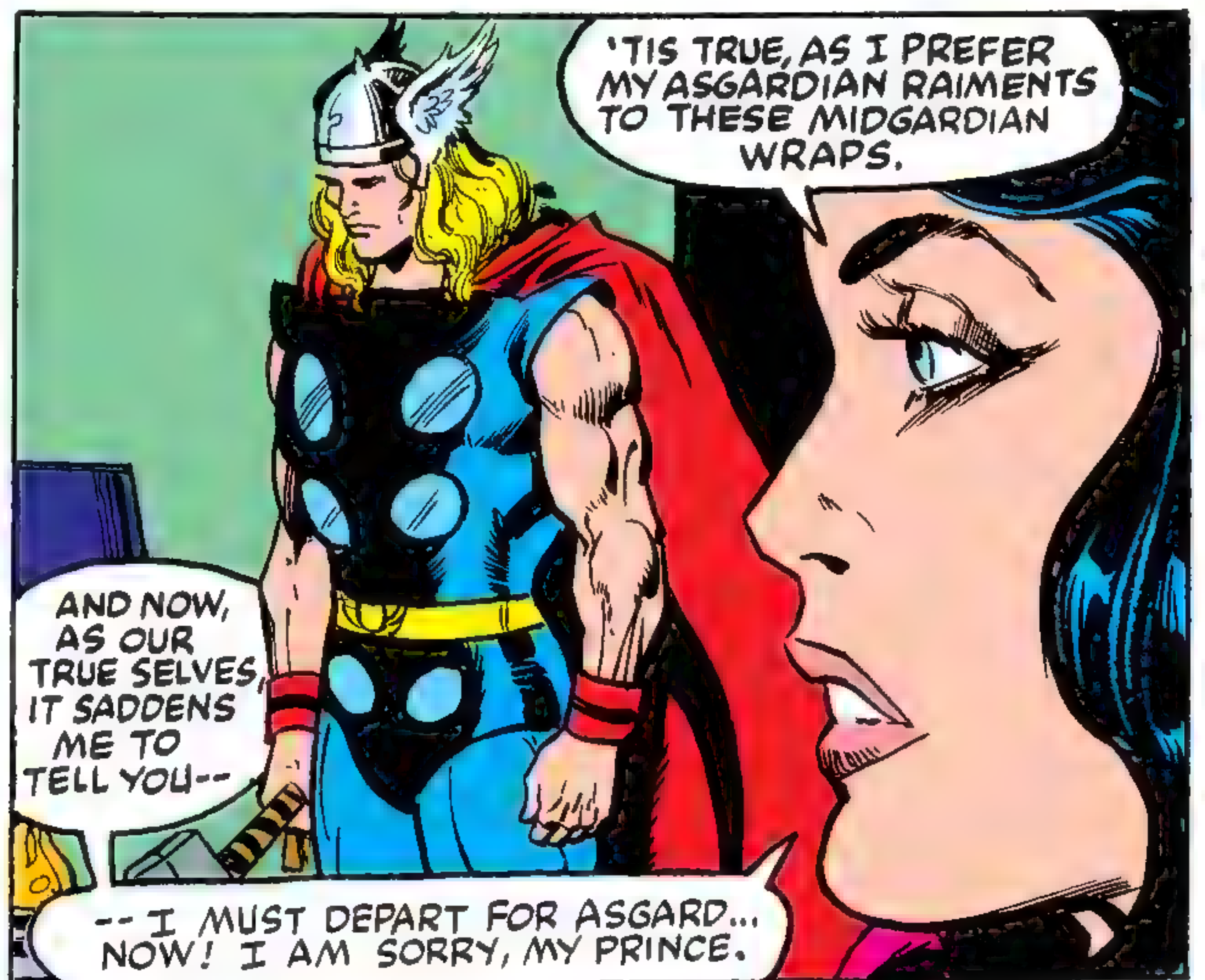
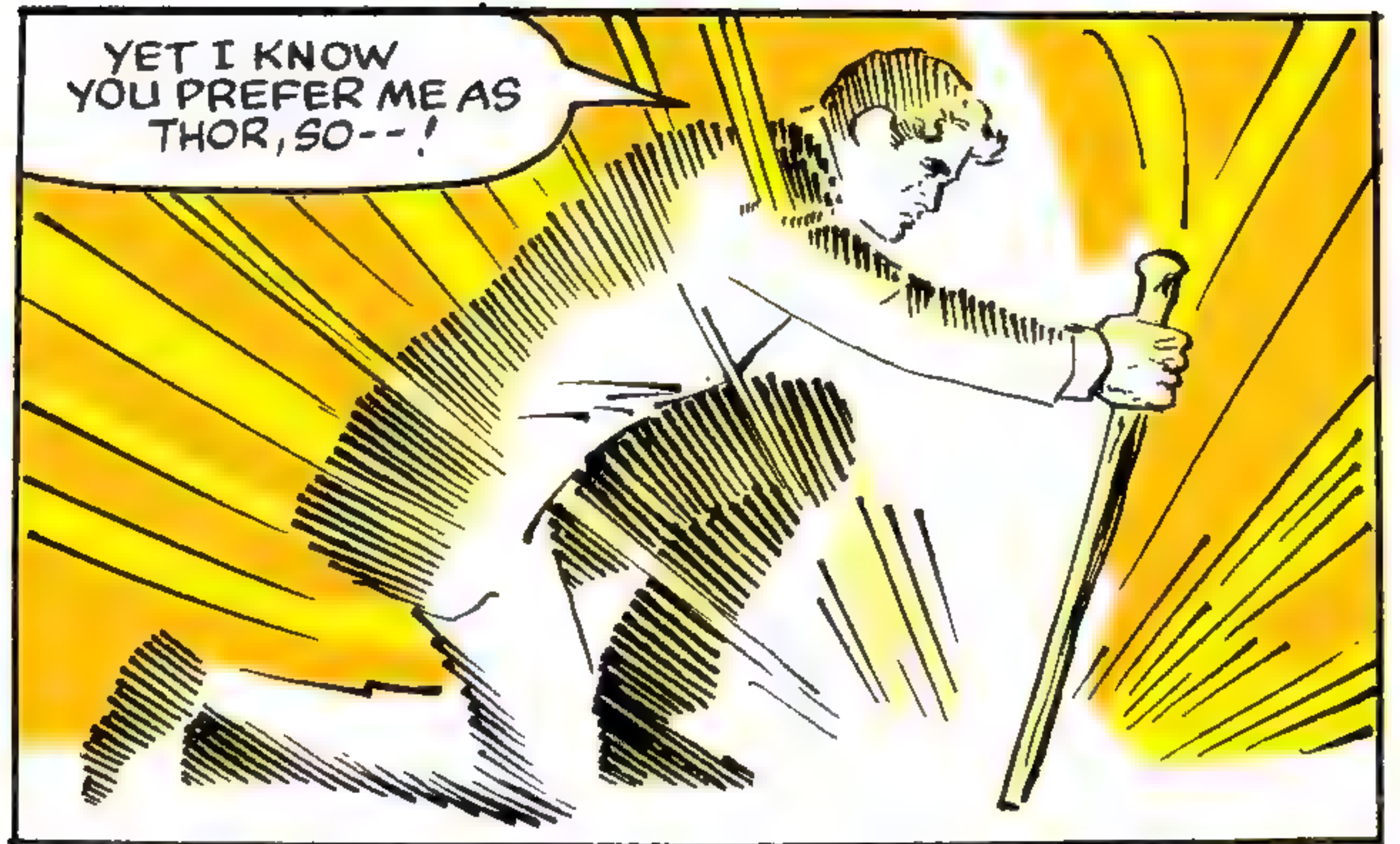
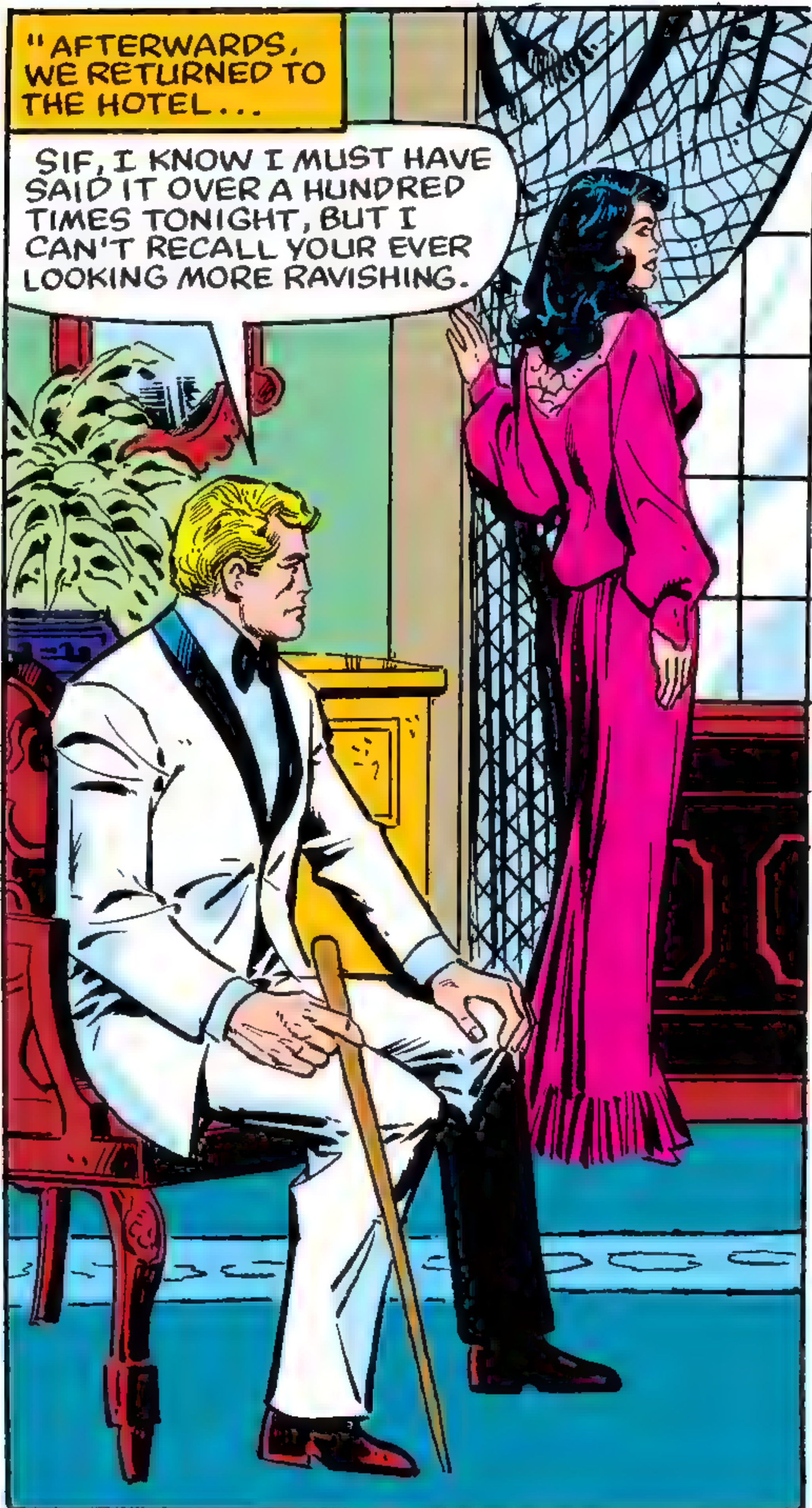


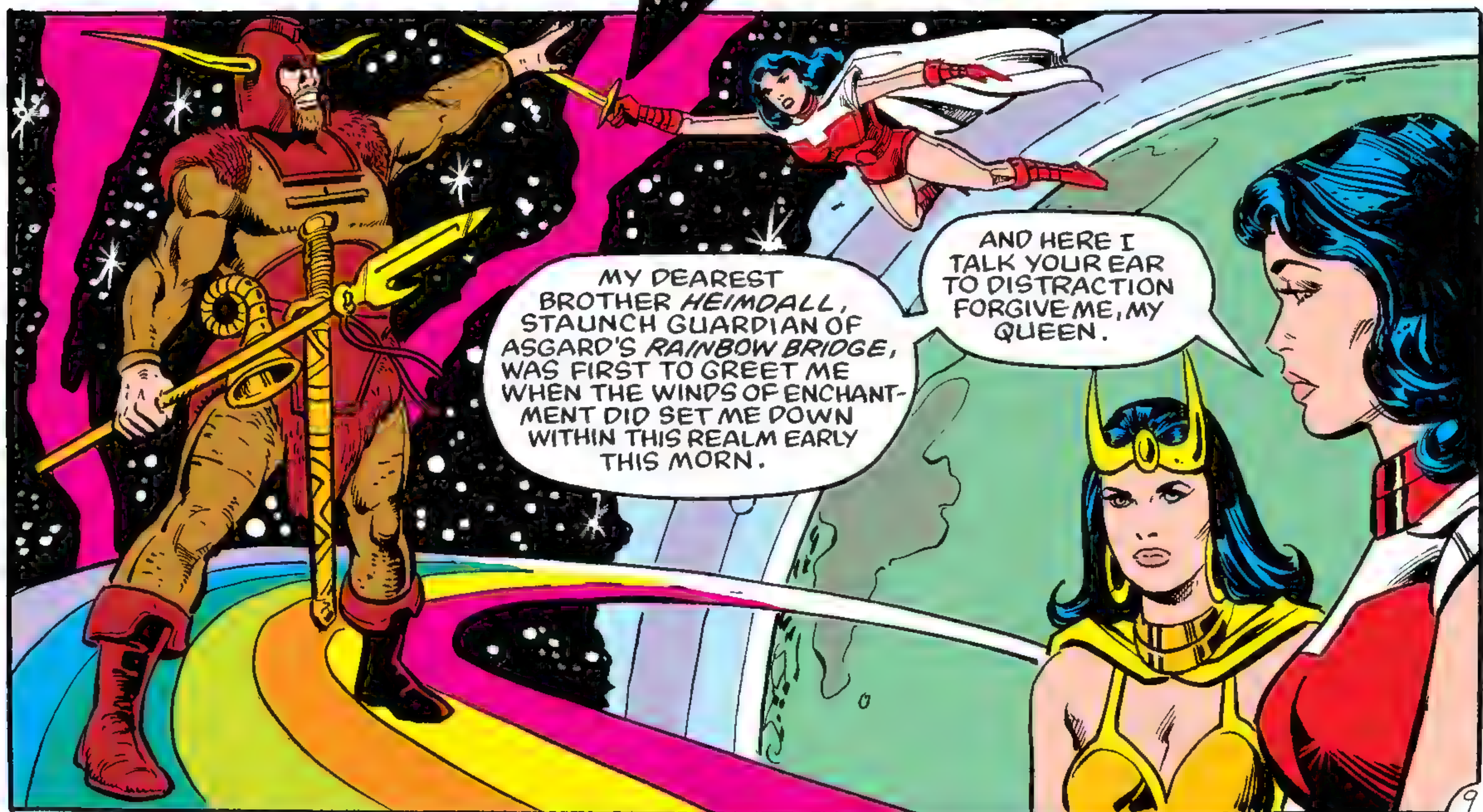
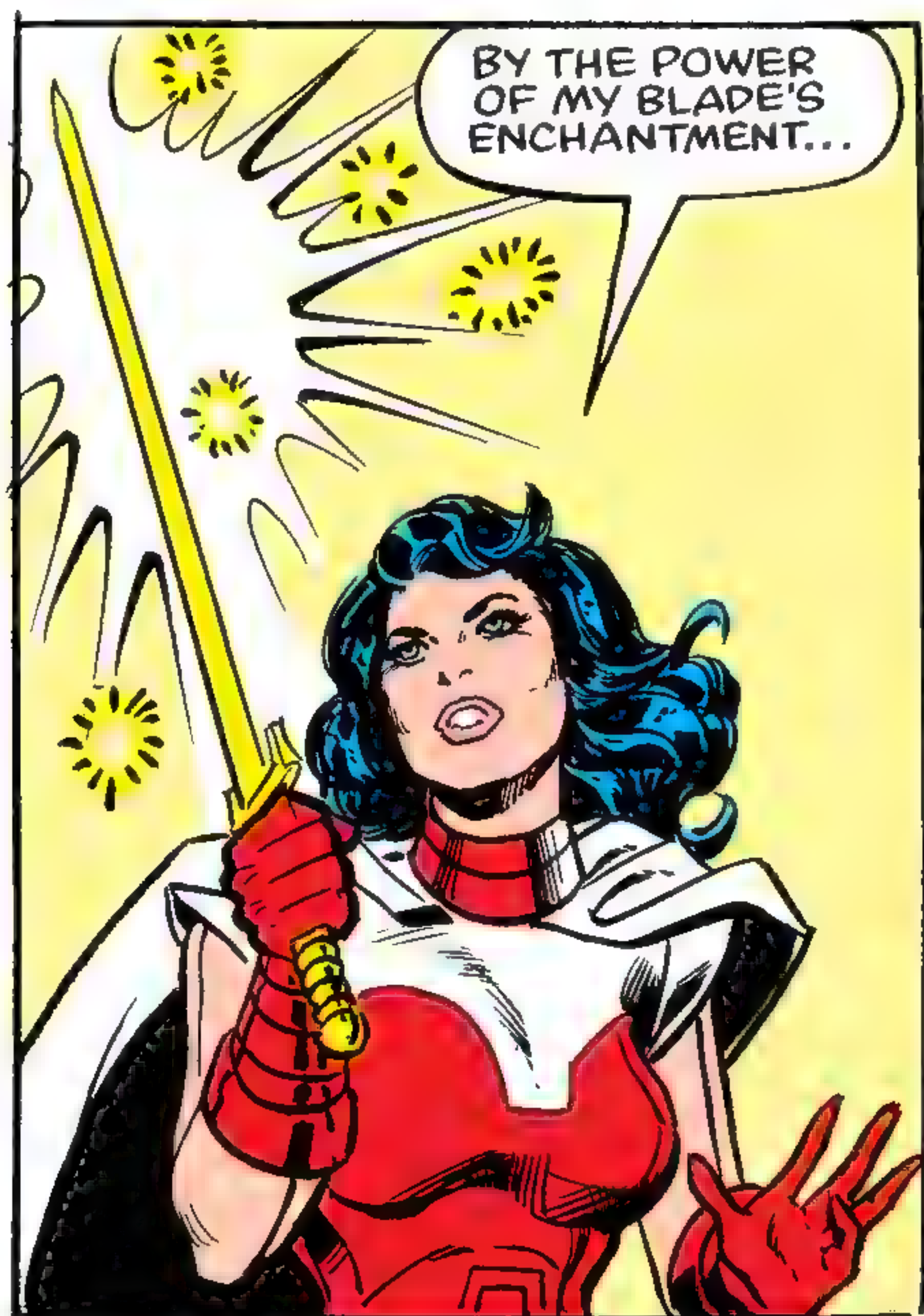
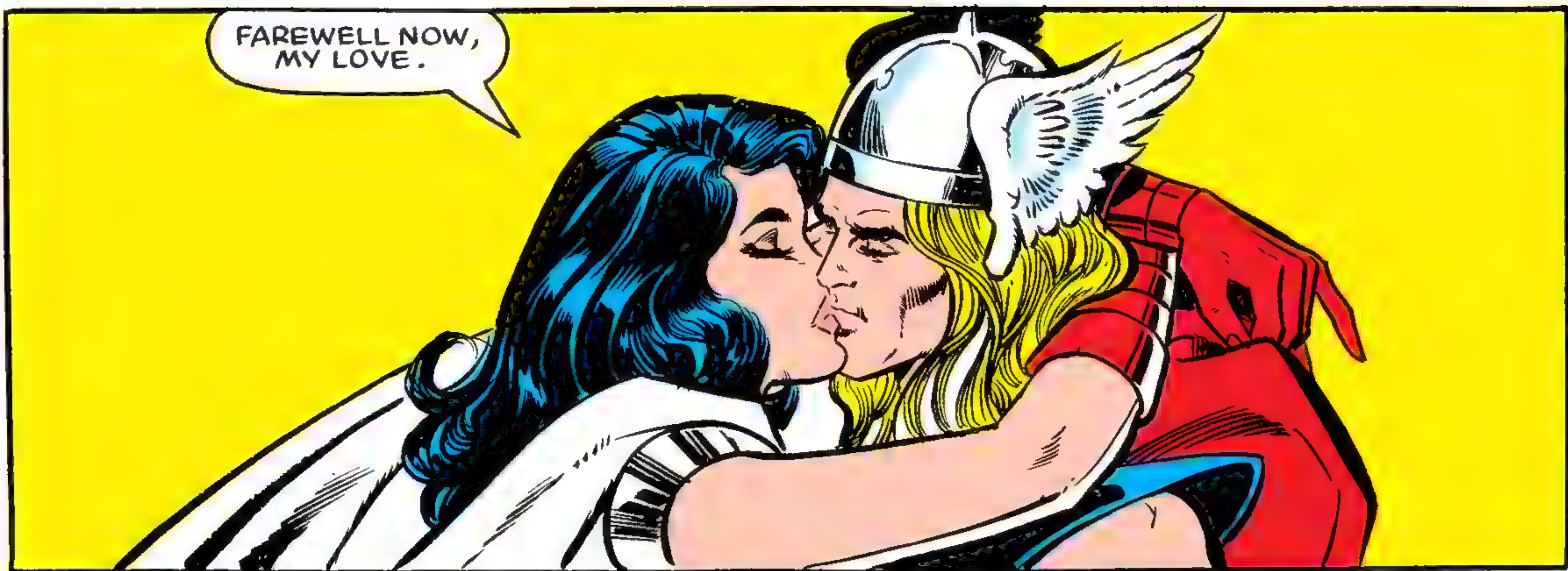


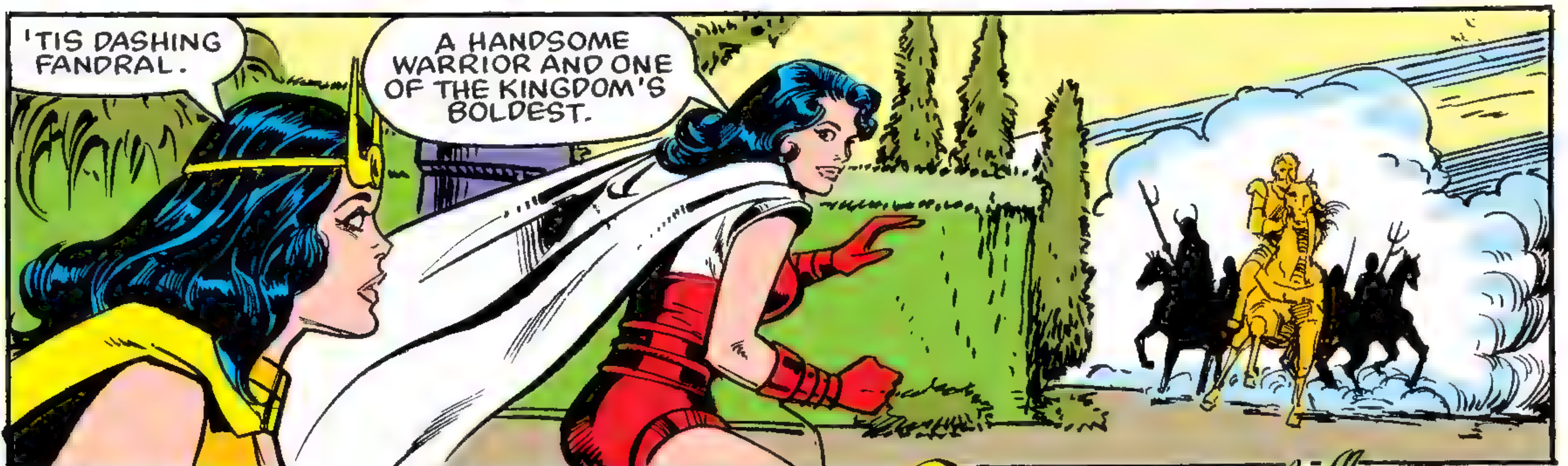


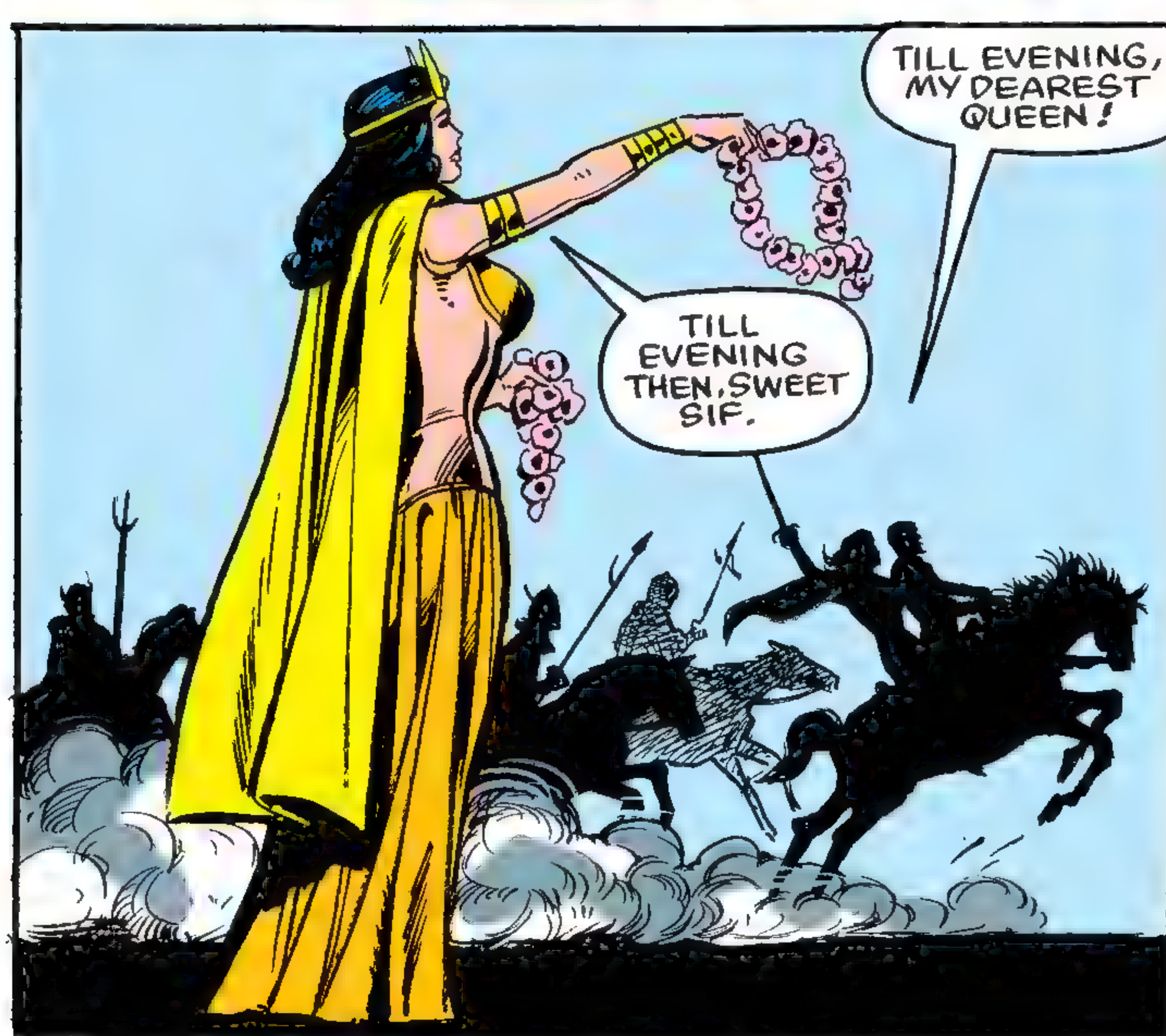
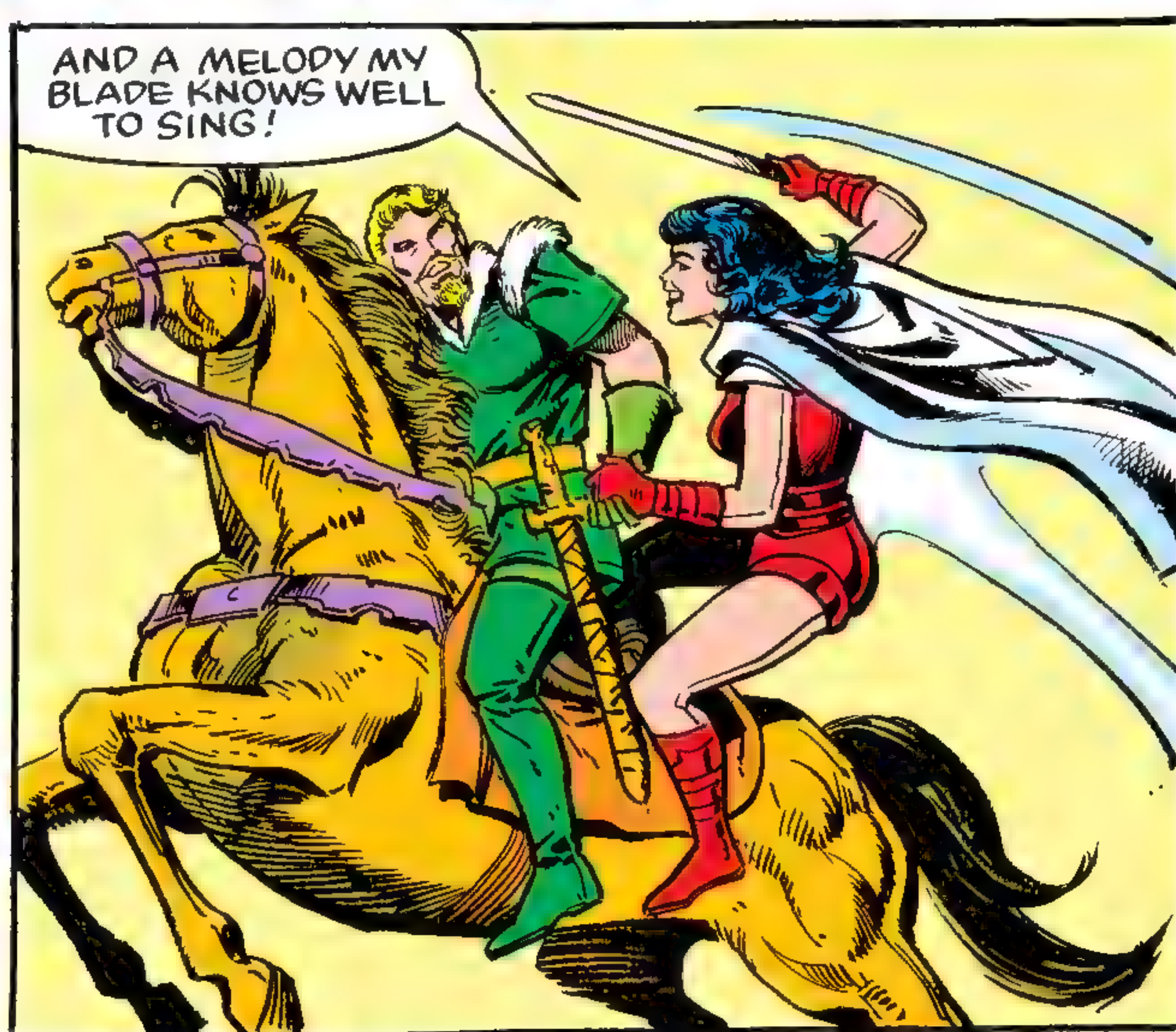












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THE MIGHTY THOR® ANNUAL



BOB LAYTON

featuring...
**UNTOLD TALES
IN THE LIFE OF
THE THUNDER GOD!**

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE SAGA of THOR**

BENEATH ETERNAL ASGARD, TIMELESS REALM OF THE NORSE GODS, THE THREE NORN SISTERS, URD, SKULD, AND VERDANDA-- FATE, BEING AND NECESSITY-- GUARD THE SACRED WELL OF WYRD, THE SPRING OF DESTINY...

HARK! 'TIS THE FESTIVE SEASON OF THOR'S BIRTH!

ALL HAIL ASGARD'S PRINCE WITH CHEER AND MIRTH!

COME GATHER, SISTERS, LET US GAZE AND SEE... WHAT HAS BEEN AND YET MAY BE...

...FOR IN THESE WATERS, FATE'S DECREE-- THE GOD OF THUNDER'S DESTINY-- SHALL PLAY BEFORE OUR EYES.

AH, THE ENCHANTMENT BEGINS TO WORK...

ALAN ZELENETZ
WRITER

BOB HALL
PENCILER

VINCE COLLETTA
INKER

RICK PARKER
LETTERER

CARL GAFFORD
COLORIST

MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CHAPTER
I

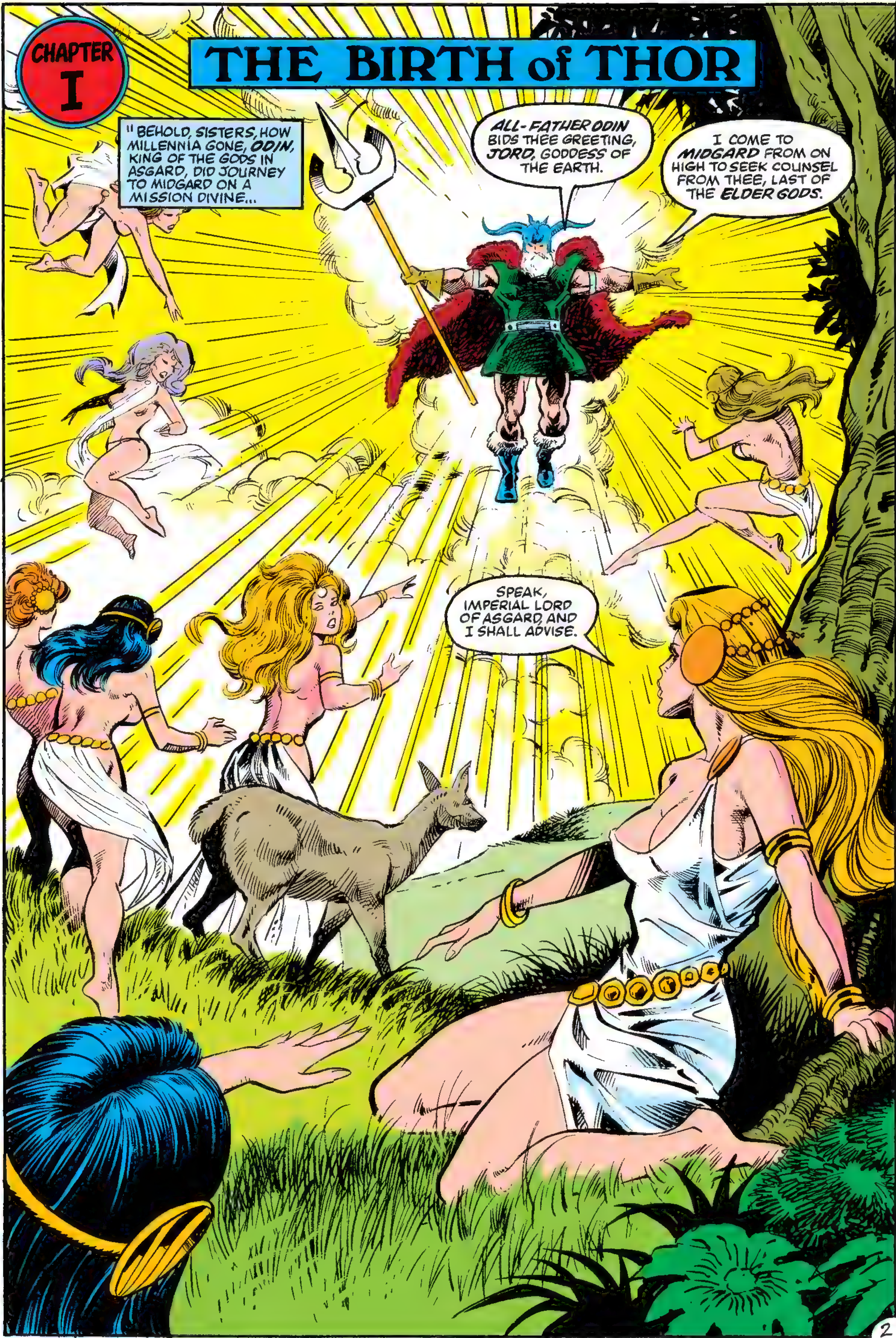
THE BIRTH of THOR

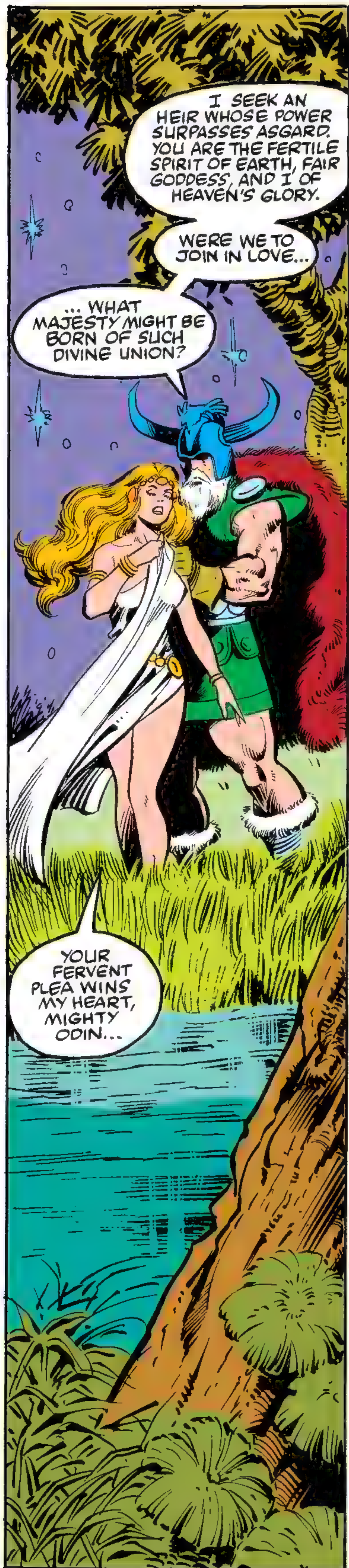
"BEHOLD, SISTERS, HOW
MILLENNIA GONE, ODIN,
KING OF THE GODS IN
ASGARD, DID JOURNEY
TO MIDGARD ON A
MISSION DIVINE..."

ALL-FATHER ODIN
BIDS THEE GREETING,
JORD, GODDESS OF
THE EARTH.

I COME TO
MIDGARD FROM ON
HIGH TO SEEK COUNSEL
FROM THEE, LAST OF
THE ELDER GODS.

SPEAK,
IMPERIAL LORD
OF ASGARD, AND
I SHALL ADVISE.





I SEEK AN
HEIR WHOSE POWER
SURPASSES ASGARD.
YOU ARE THE FERTILE
SPIRIT OF EARTH, FAIR
GODDESS, AND I OF
HEAVEN'S GLORY.

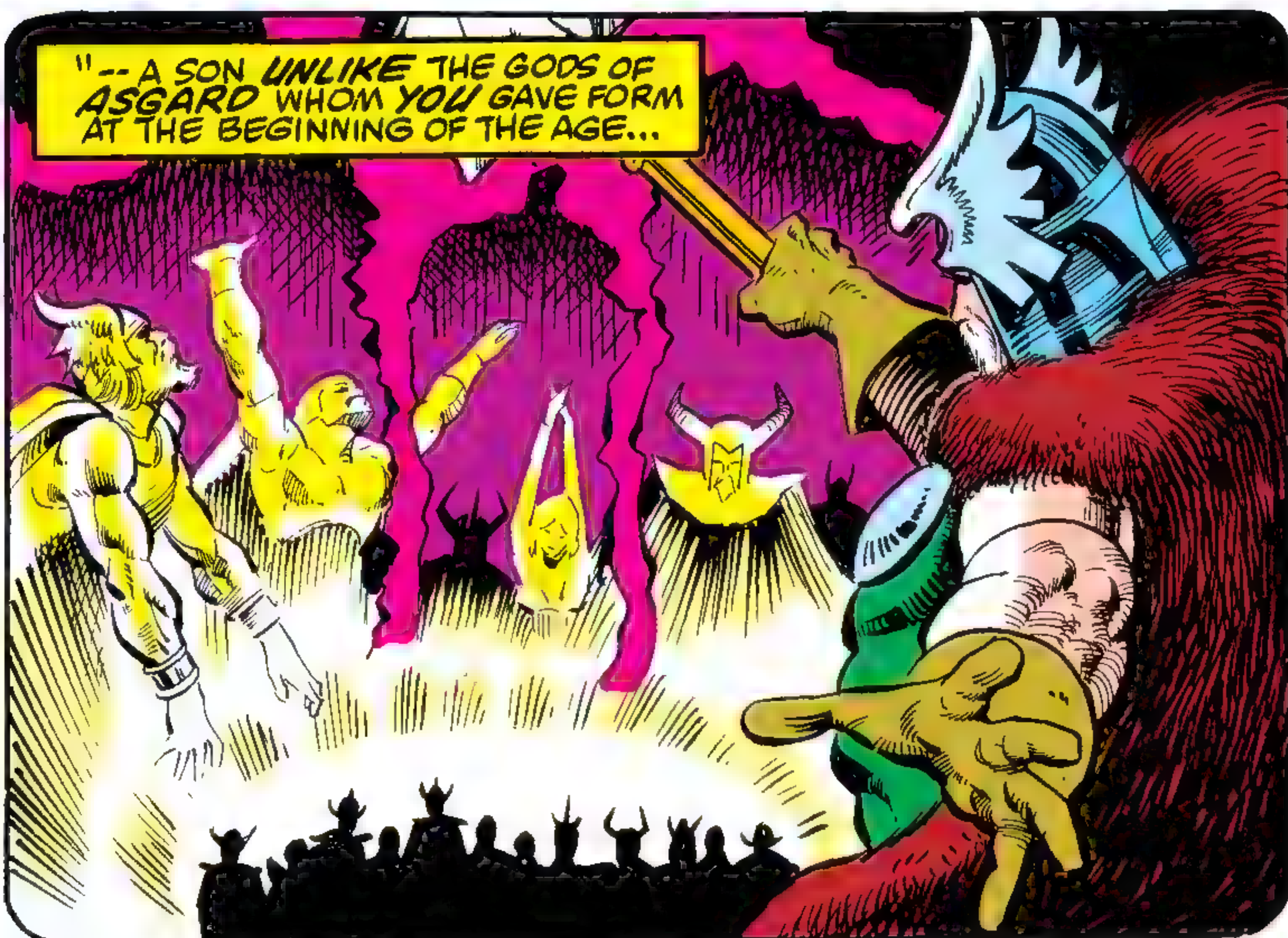
WERE WE TO
JOIN IN LOVE...

... WHAT
MAJESTY MIGHT BE
BORN OF SUCH
DIVINE UNION?

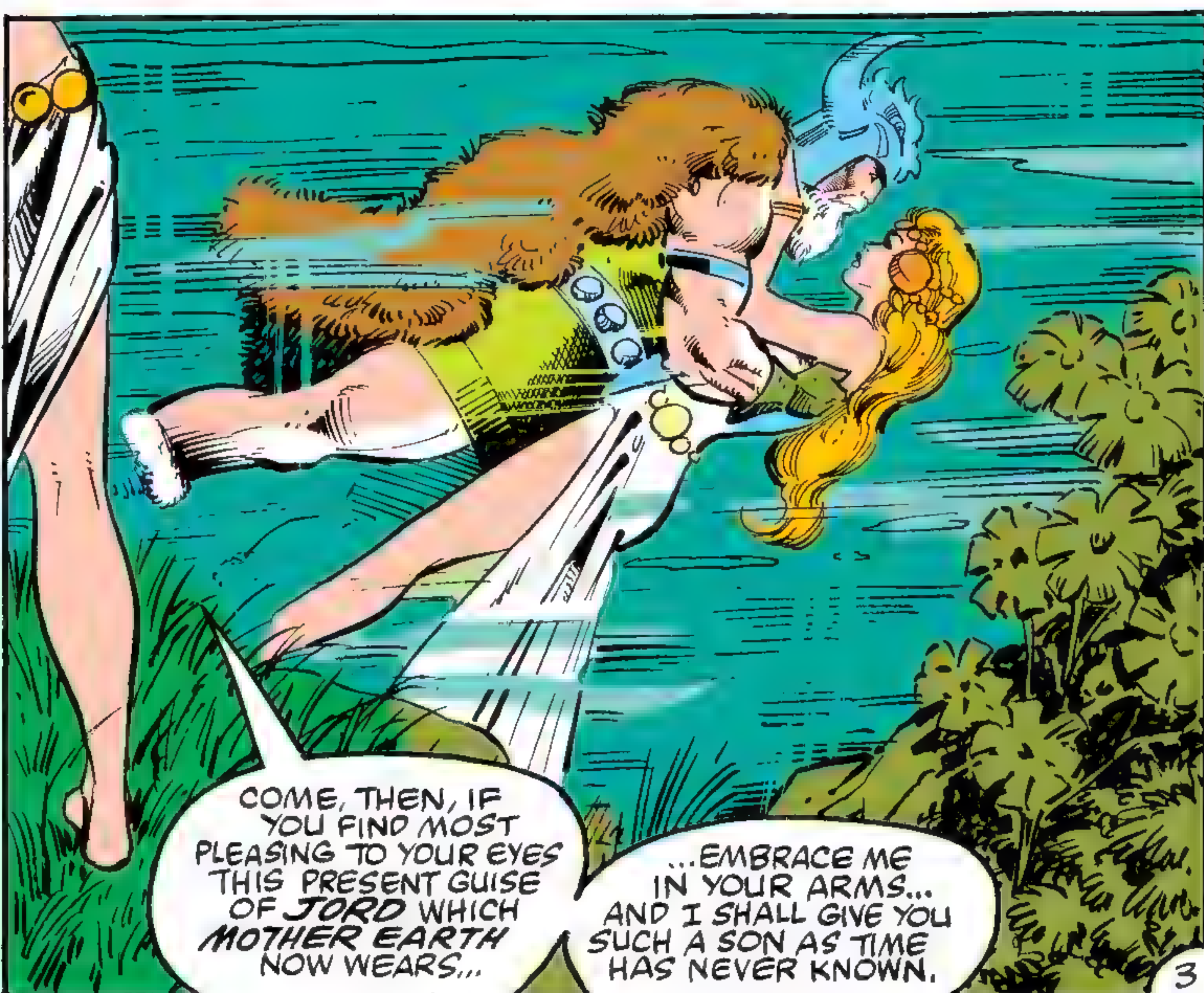
YOUR
FERVENT
PLEA WINS
MY HEART,
MIGHTY
ODIN...



... AND I DO UNDERSTAND WITHIN MY
SOUL YOUR BURNING DESIRE FOR A SON
WHOSE STRENGTH MIGHT DERIVE *NOT*
SOLELY FROM YOUR OWN--

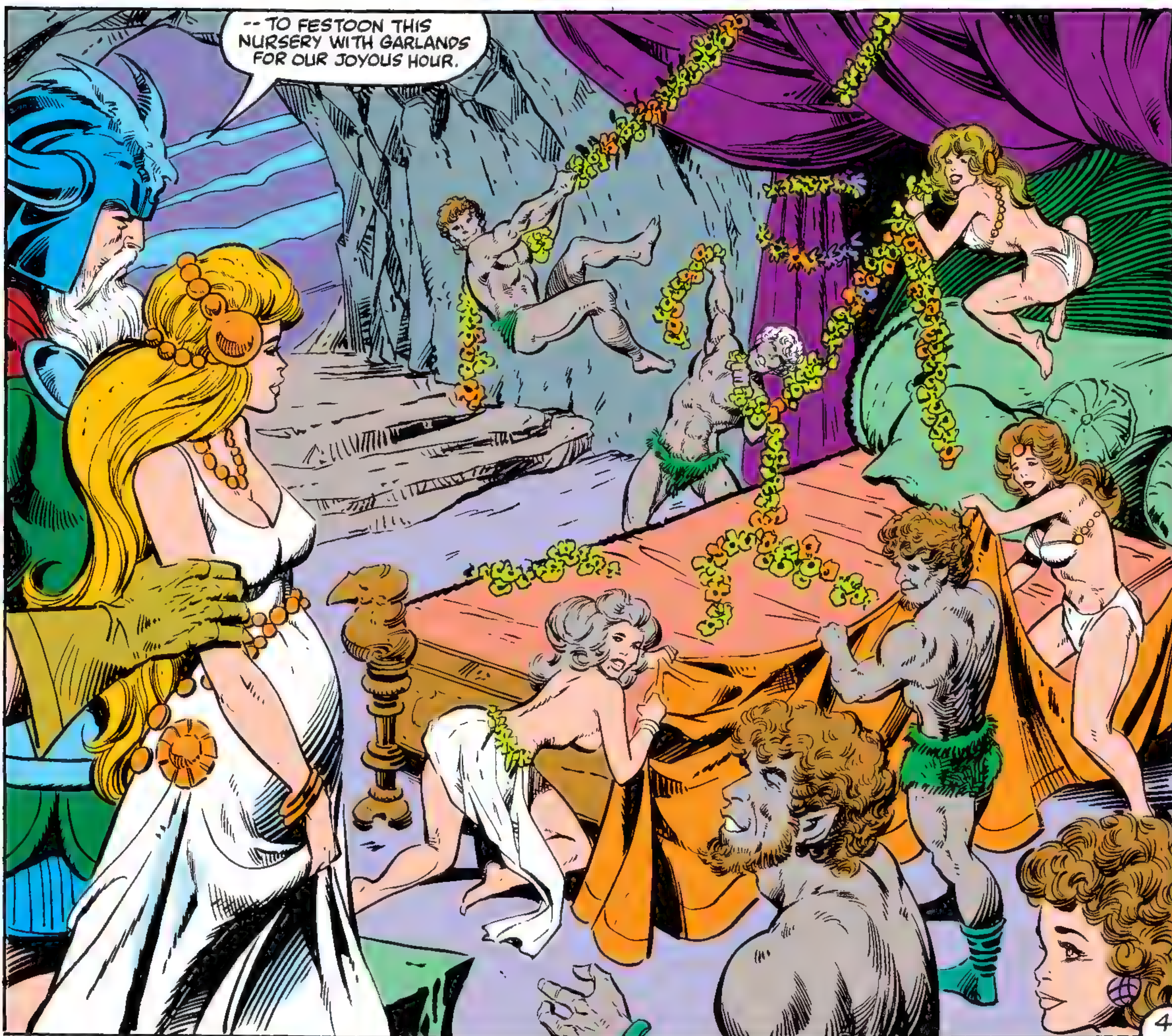
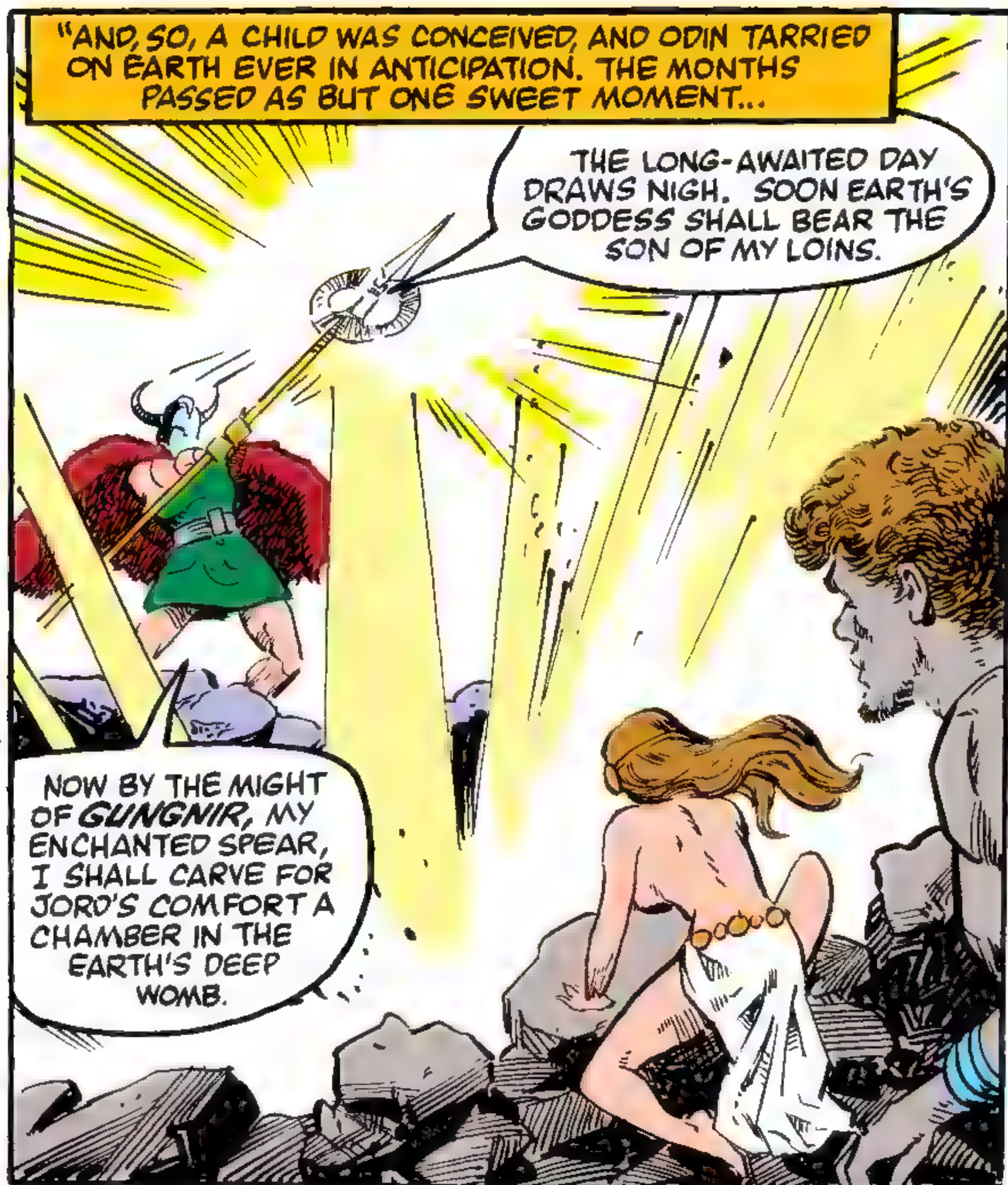


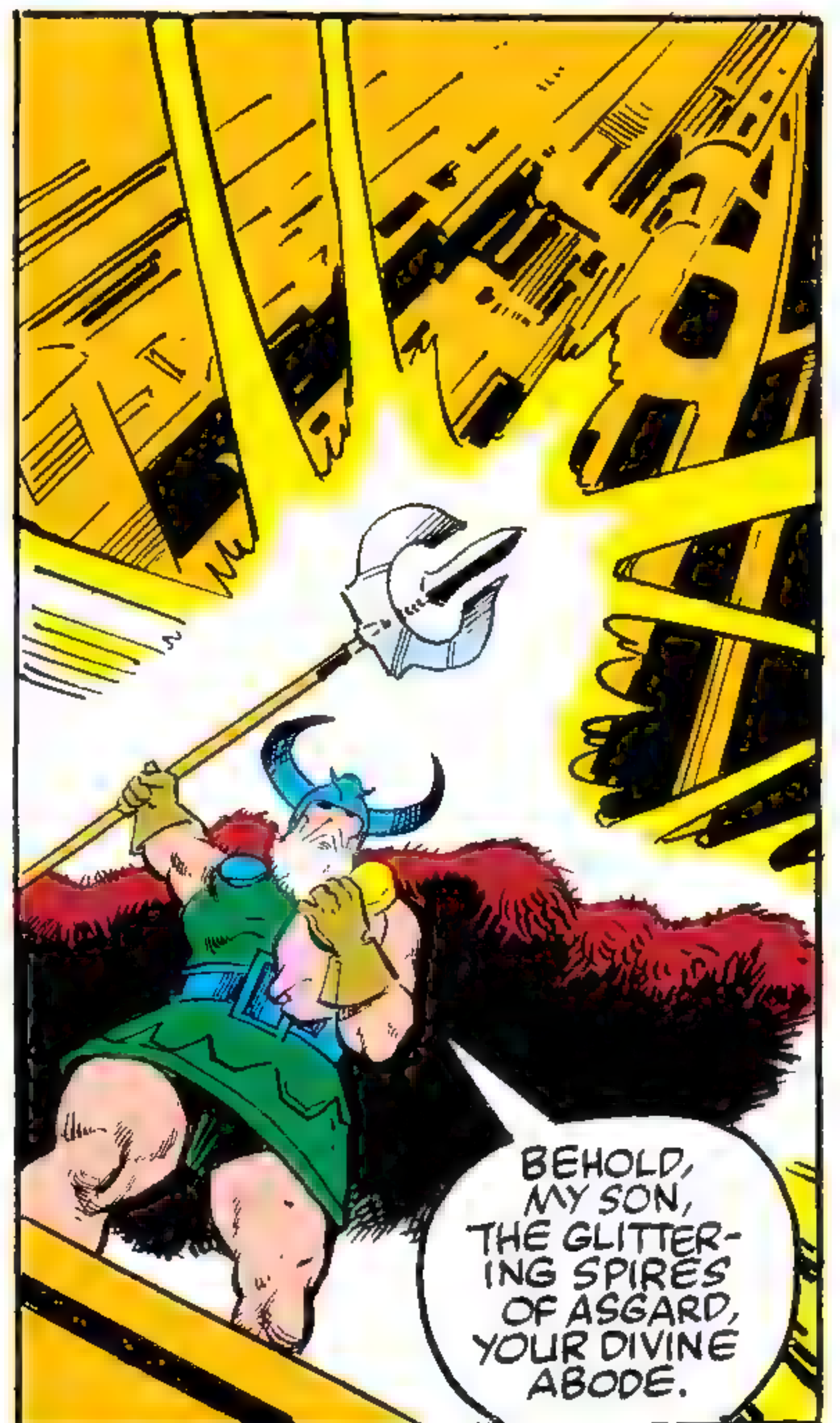
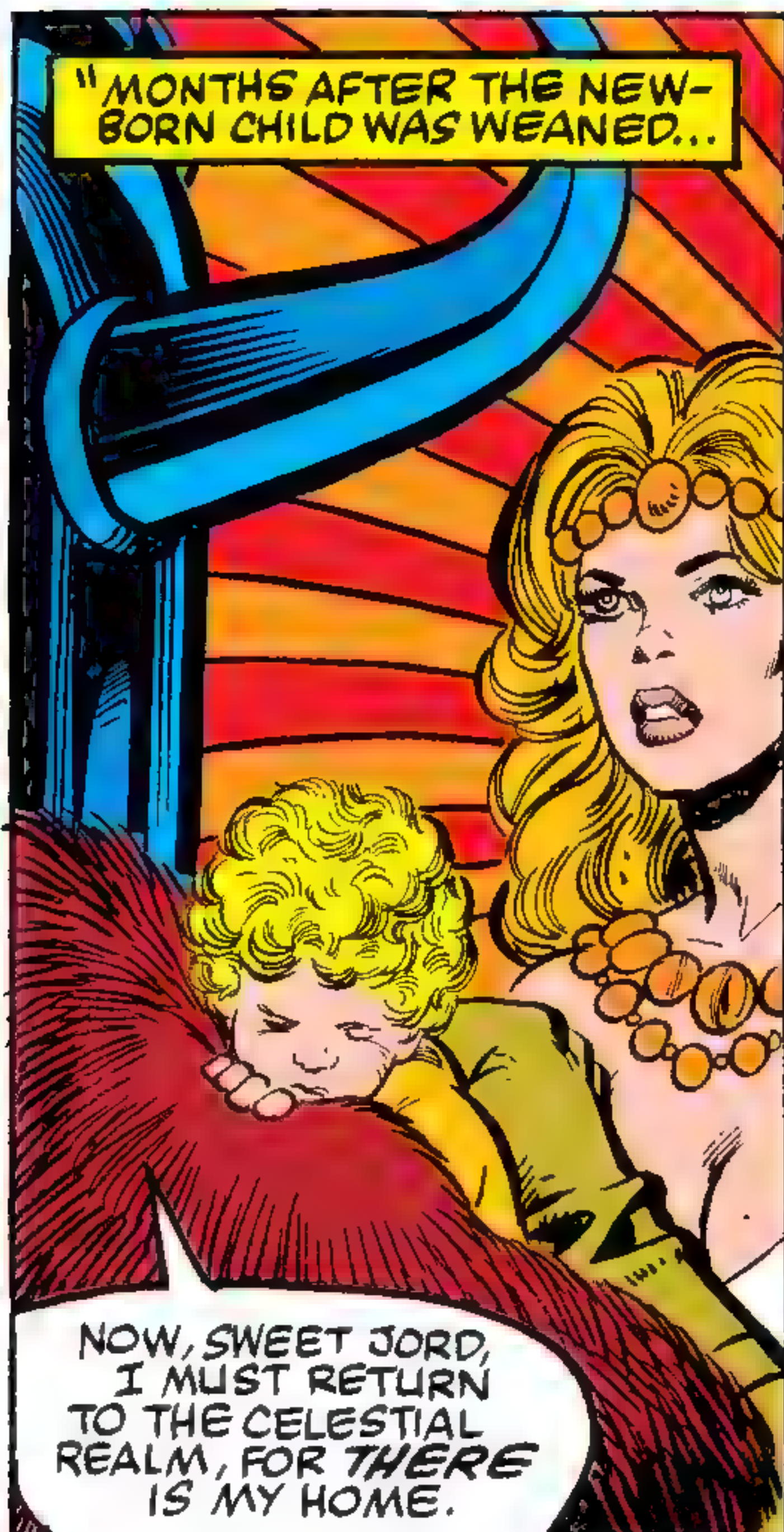
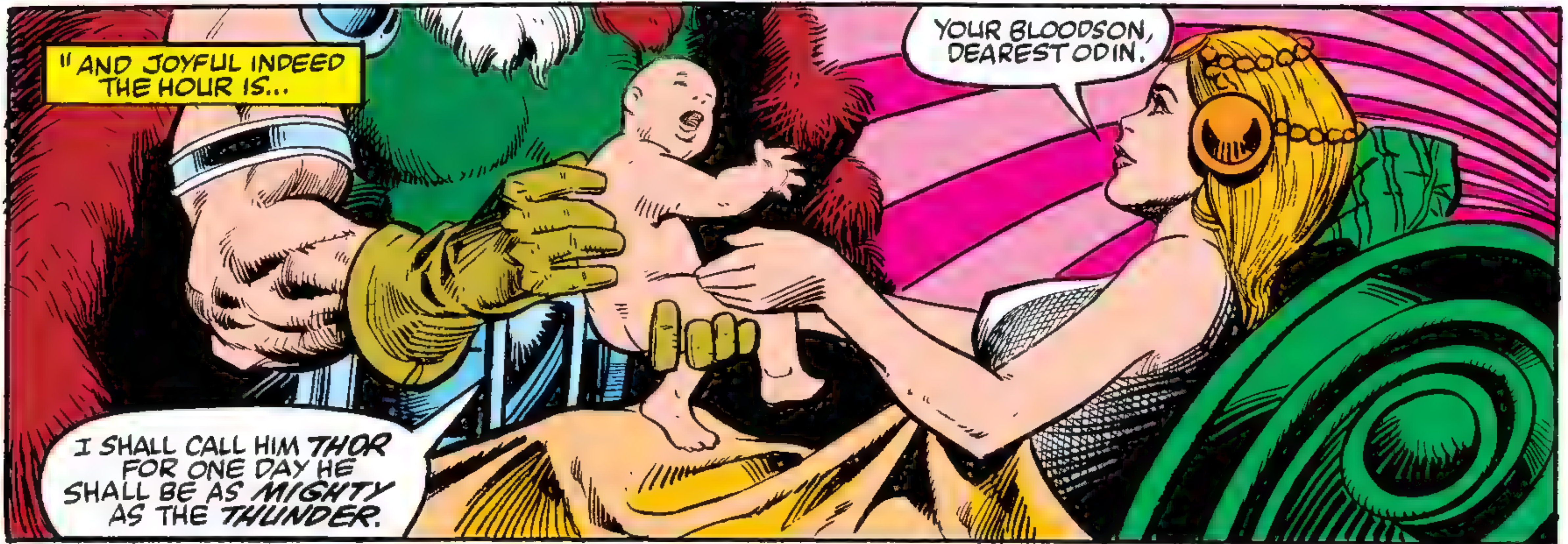
"-- A SON *UNLIKE* THE GODS OF
ASGARD WHOM YOU GAVE FORM
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE AGE...



COME, THEN, IF
YOU FIND MOST
PLEASING TO YOUR EYES
THIS PRESENT GUISE
OF *JORD* WHICH
MOTHER EARTH
NOW WEARS...

...EMBRACE ME
IN YOUR ARMS...
AND I SHALL GIVE YOU
SUCH A SON AS TIME
HAS NEVER KNOWN.





CHAPTER
II

THE TREASURES of the GODS

"NOW, SISTERS, SEE
THE LAD OF EIGHT..."

FATHER, PRAY TELL
US THE STORY OF GLORIOUS
GUNGNIR, THE HEAVEN-
SPEAR YOU HOLD IN YOUR
HAND, ONCE AGAIN.

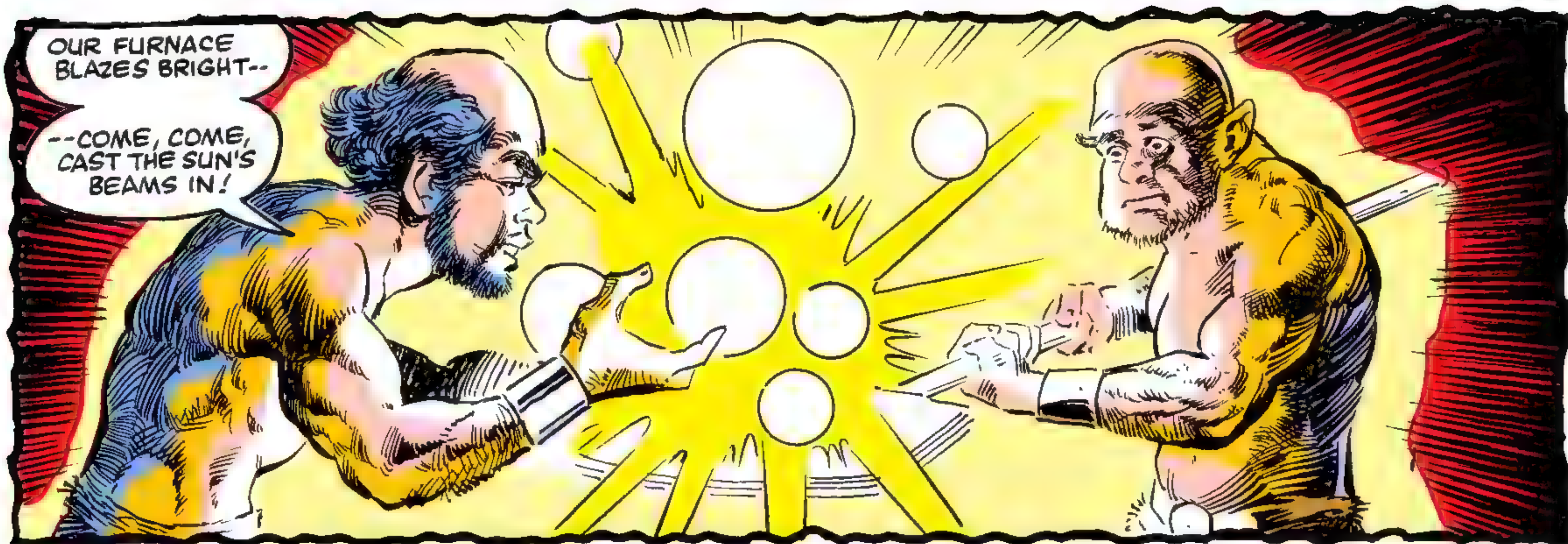
ONCE MORE?
WILL YOU AND YOUR
HALF-BROTHER LOKI
NEVER TIRE OF THE
TALE, MY BELOVED
THOR?

NAY, SIRE, FOR
'TIS OUR IMMORTAL
HERITAGE.

AND MAYHAP, IN
YOUR RE-TELLING OF
SECRET THINGS, I
WILL DISCOVER NEW
PATHS TO POWER
AND WITCHERY.

AT A TIME BEYOND RECKONING,
IN THE DARK KINGDOM OF THE
DWARFS BENEATH THE ASGARD
MOUNTAINS...

YOU'VE DONE IT, BROTHER! YOUR MAGIC
SONG LURES SHIMMERING RAYS OF SUN-
LIGHT FROM HIGH HEAVEN TO OUR
CAVERNS UNDERGROUND.

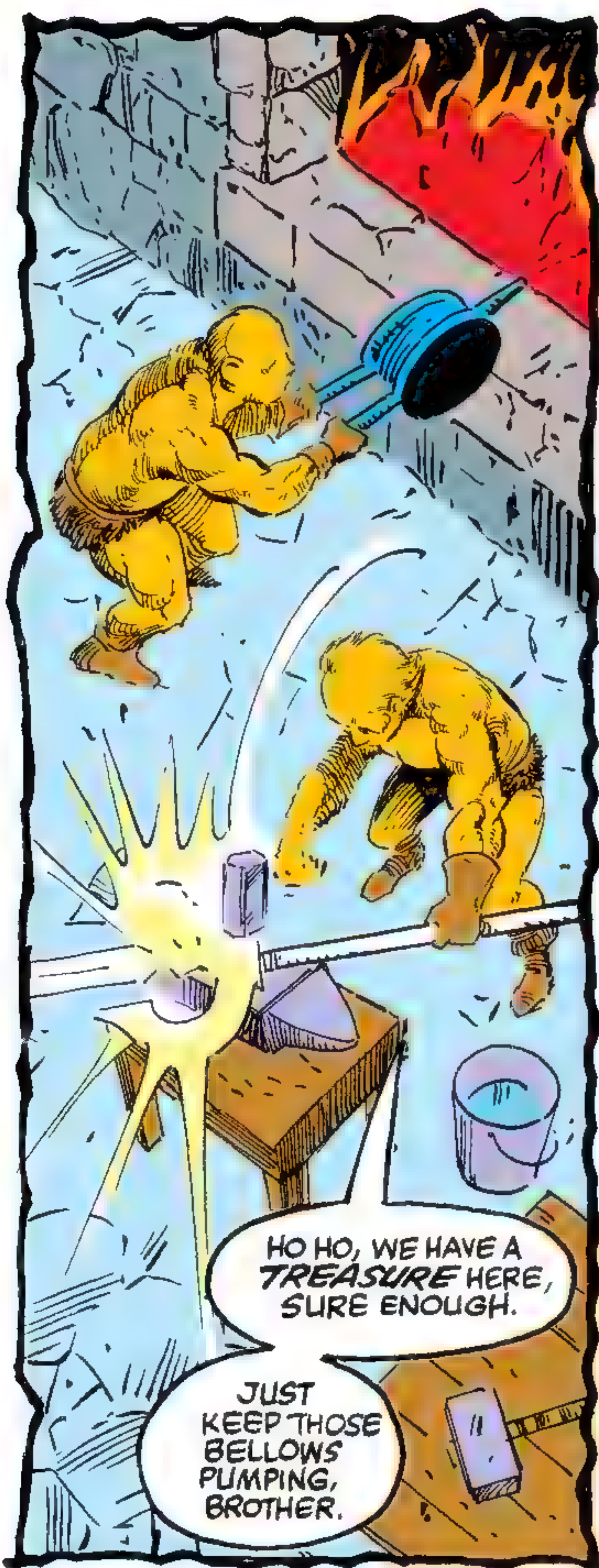


OUR FURNACE
BLAZES BRIGHT--

--COME, COME,
CAST THE SUN'S
BEAMS IN!

WE'LL GIVE THE GODS A GIFT
SURPASSING ALL OTHERS, AND
THEY'LL PAY US HANDSOMELY
BY ADDING YET *MORE* GOLD
TO OUR HOARD.

ENOUGH! ENOUGH!
NOW LET'S HAVE OUR
MOLTEN SUNSHINE
ON THE ANVIL!



HO HO, WE HAVE A
TREASURE HERE,
SURE ENOUGH.

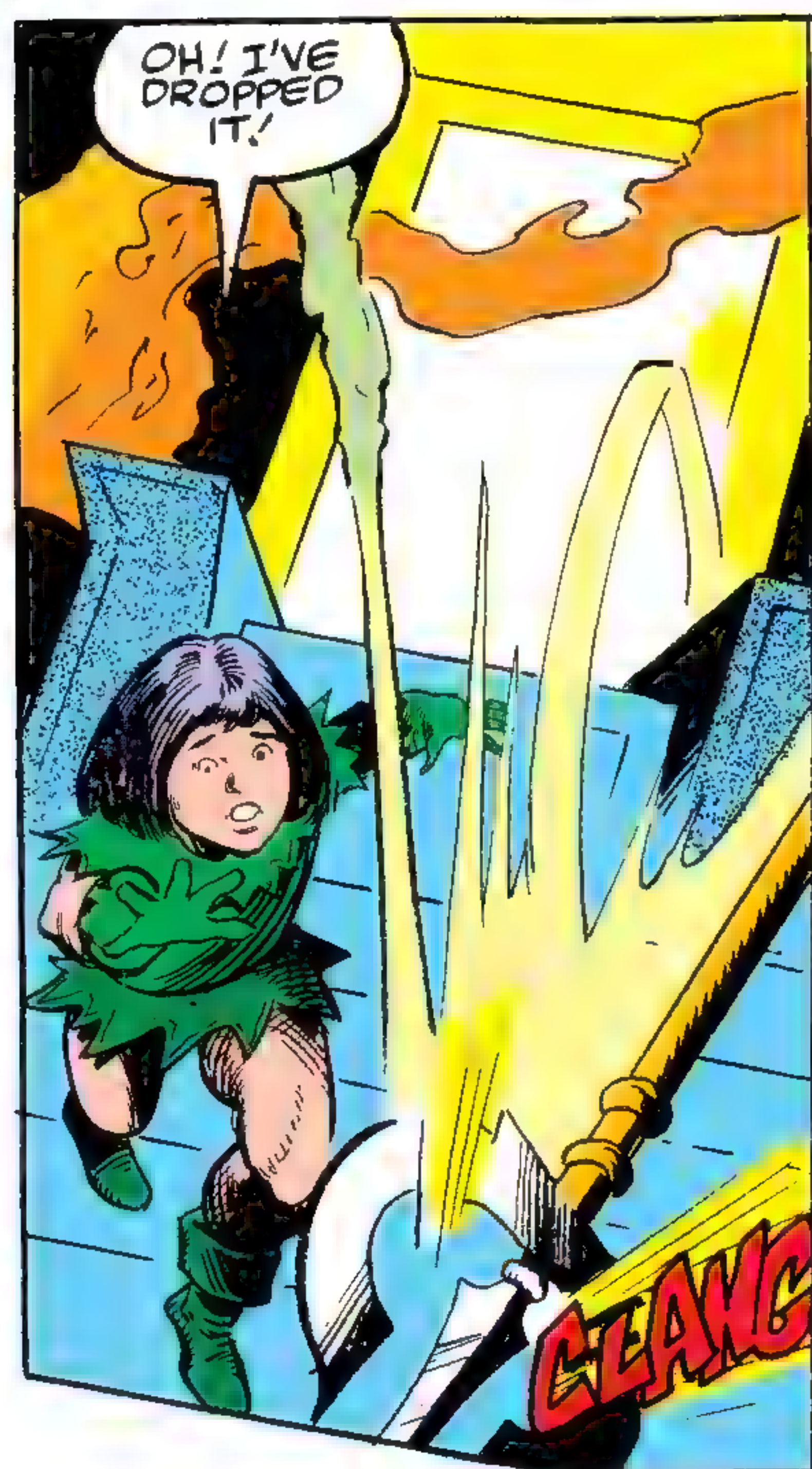
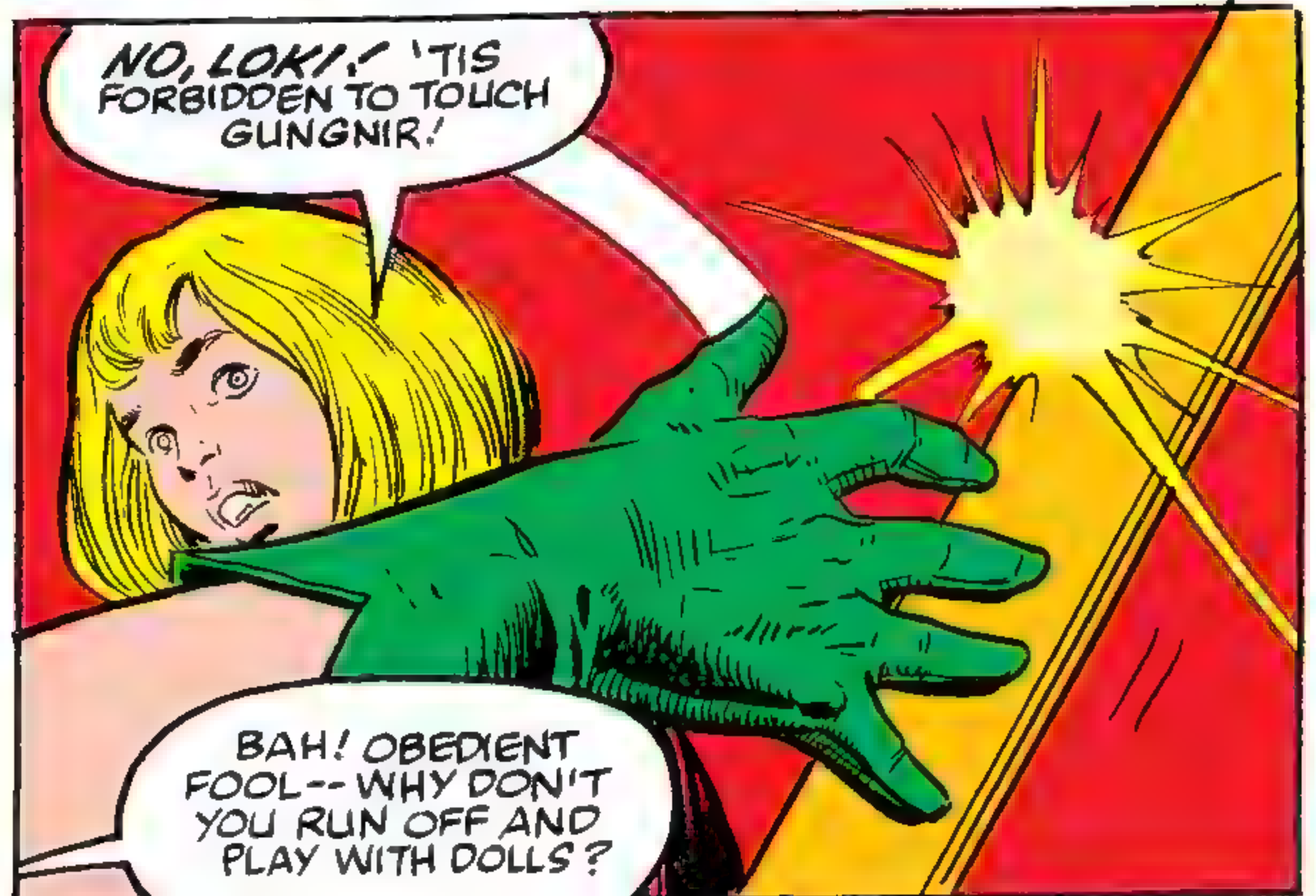
JUST
KEEP THOSE
BELLOWS
PUMPING,
BROTHER.

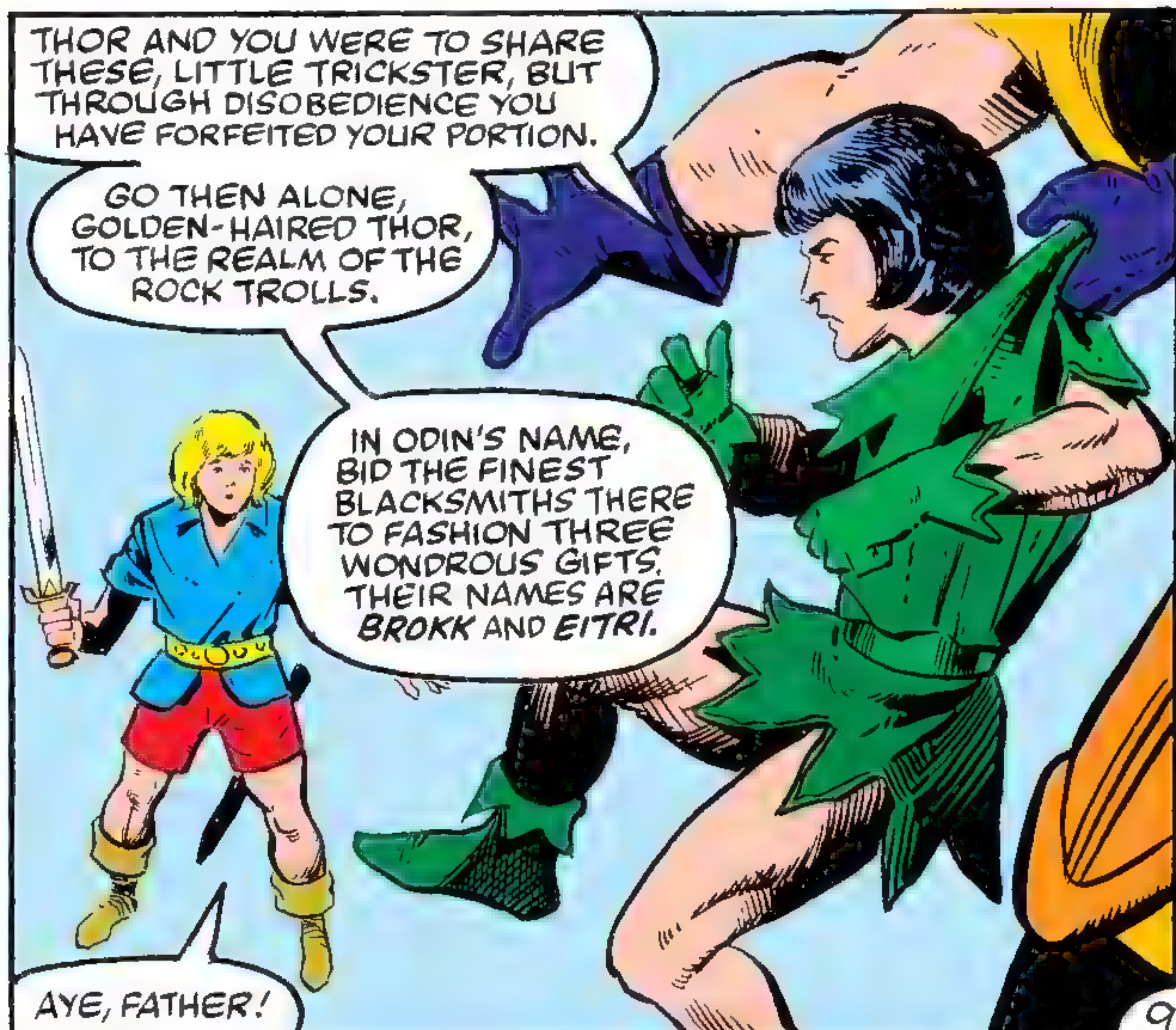
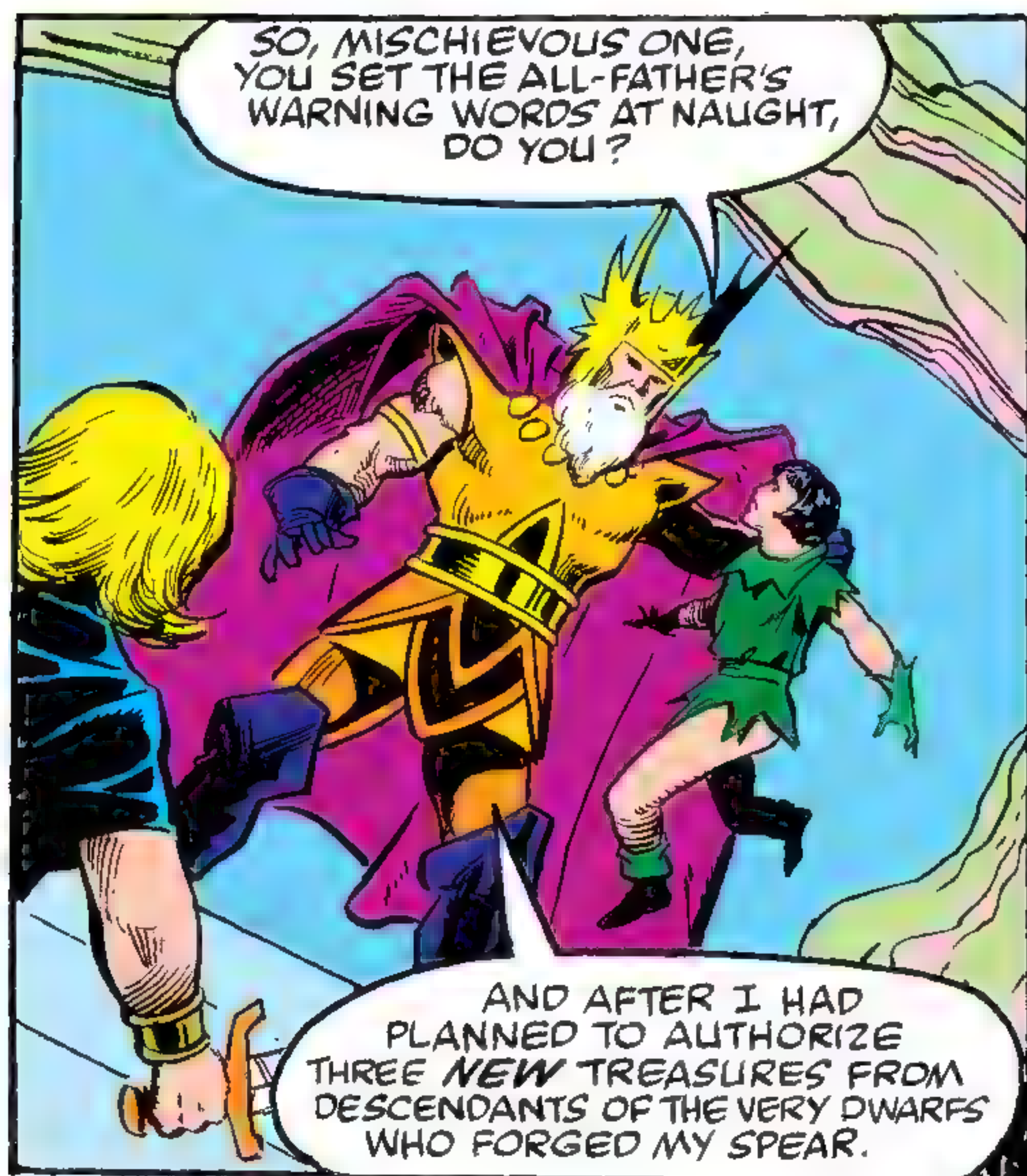
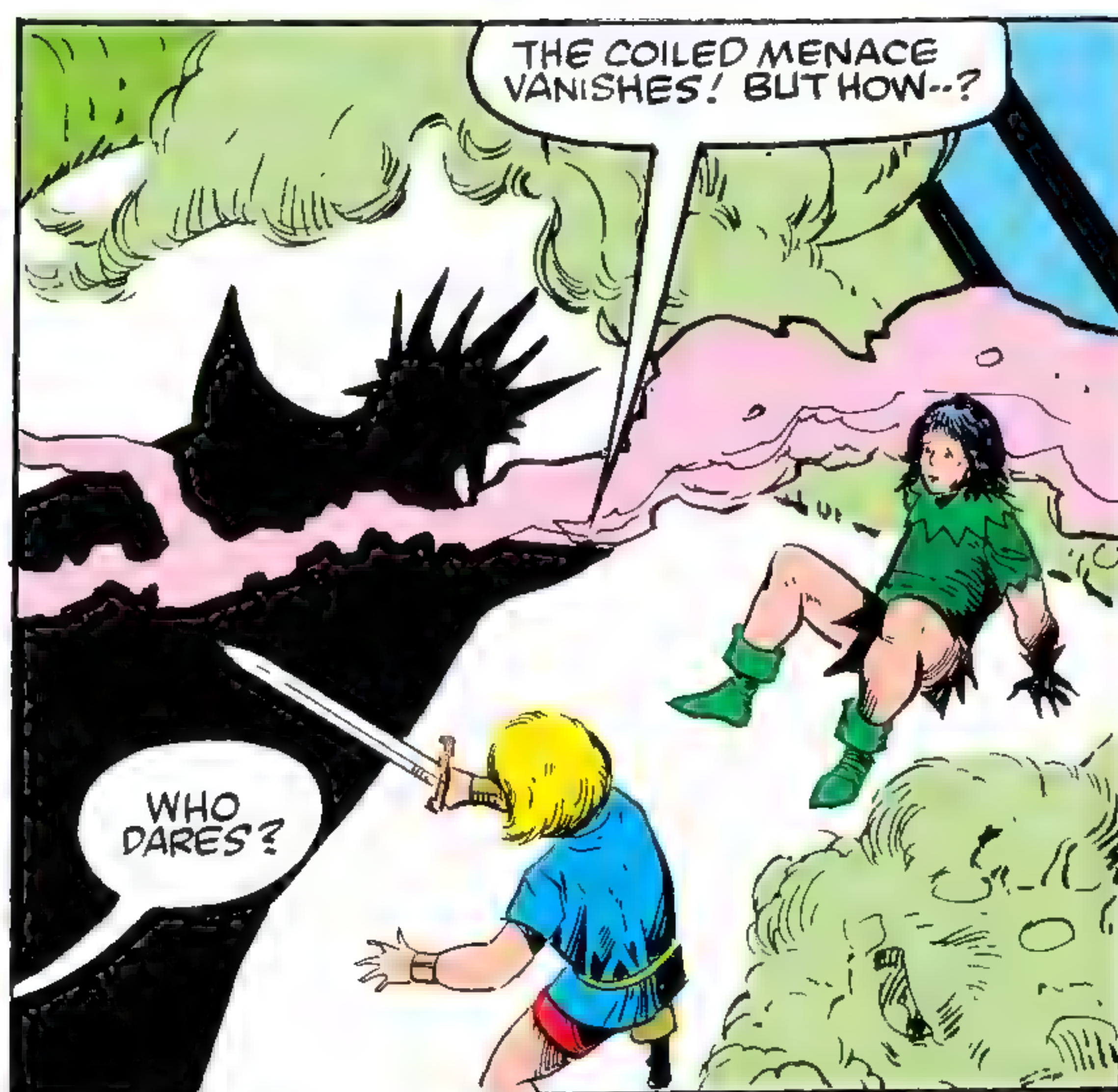
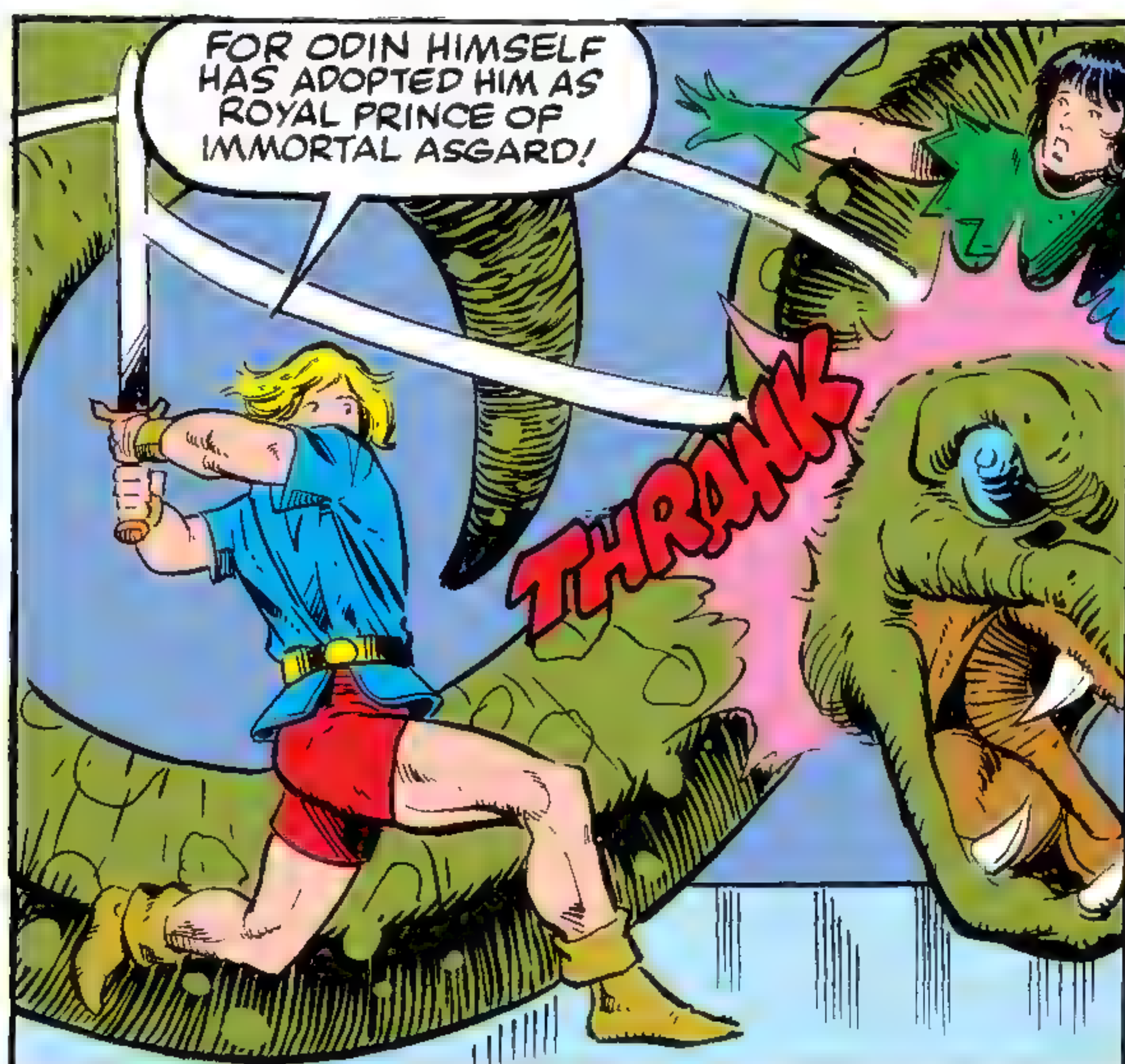


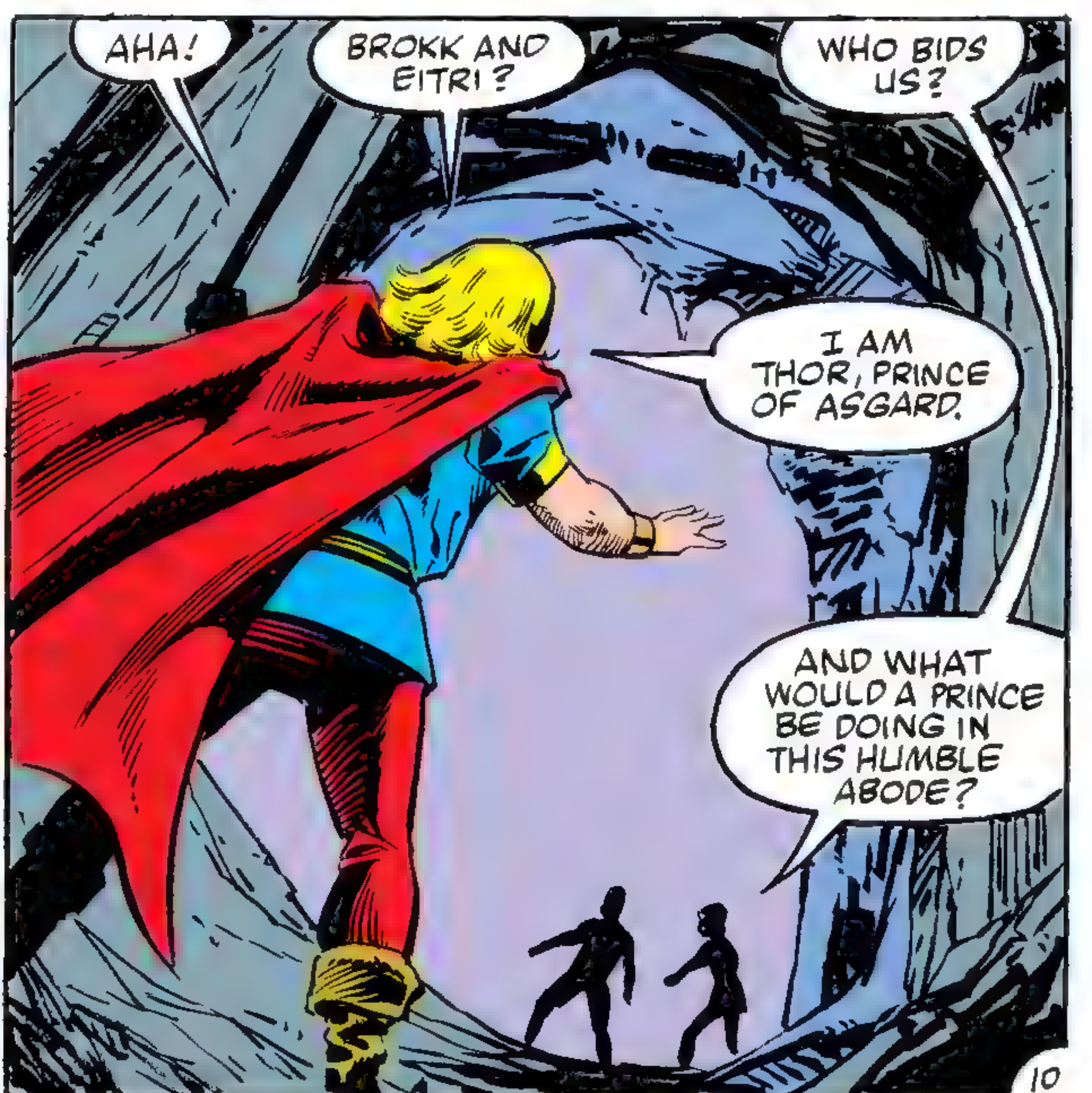
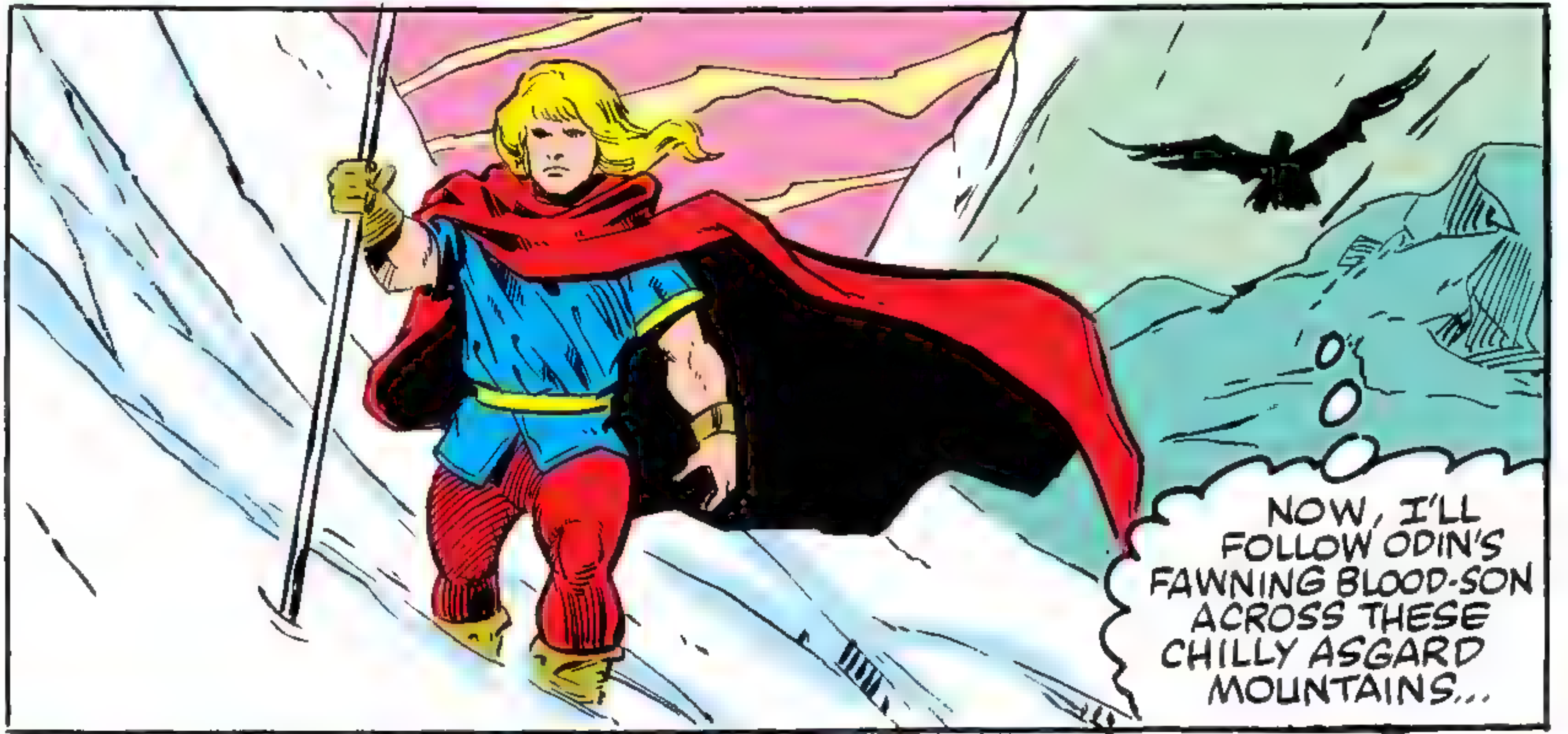
AH! WHAT
WE HAVE
FORGED THIS
DAY!

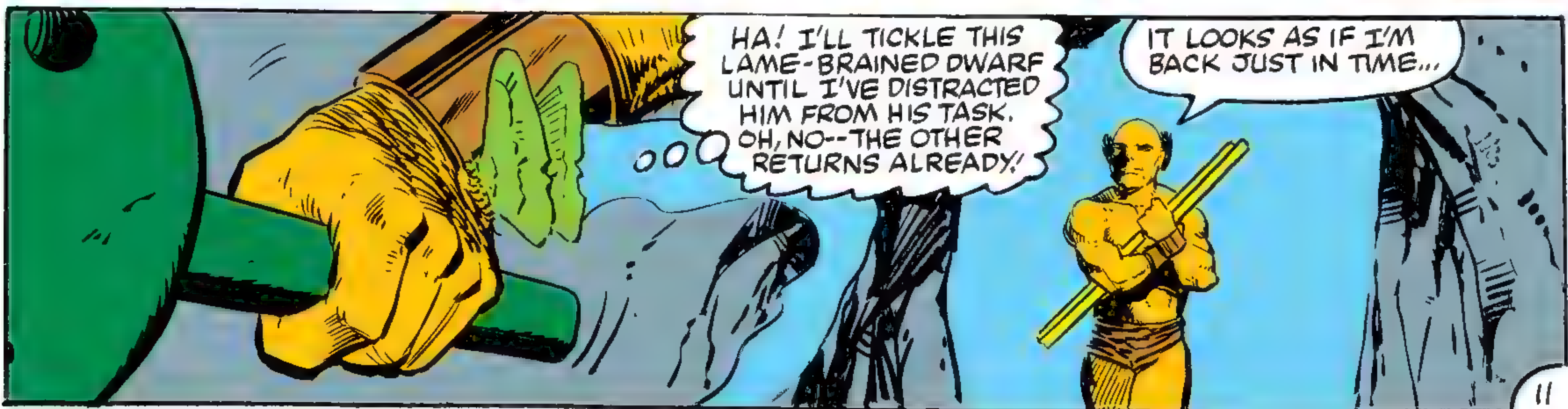
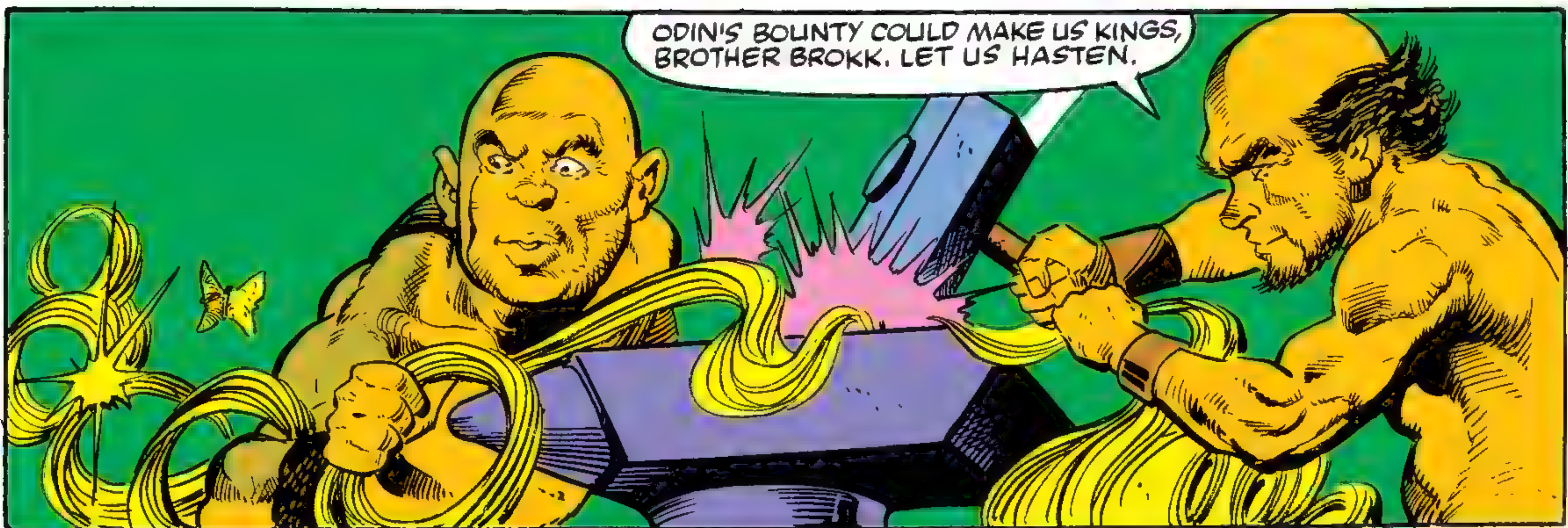
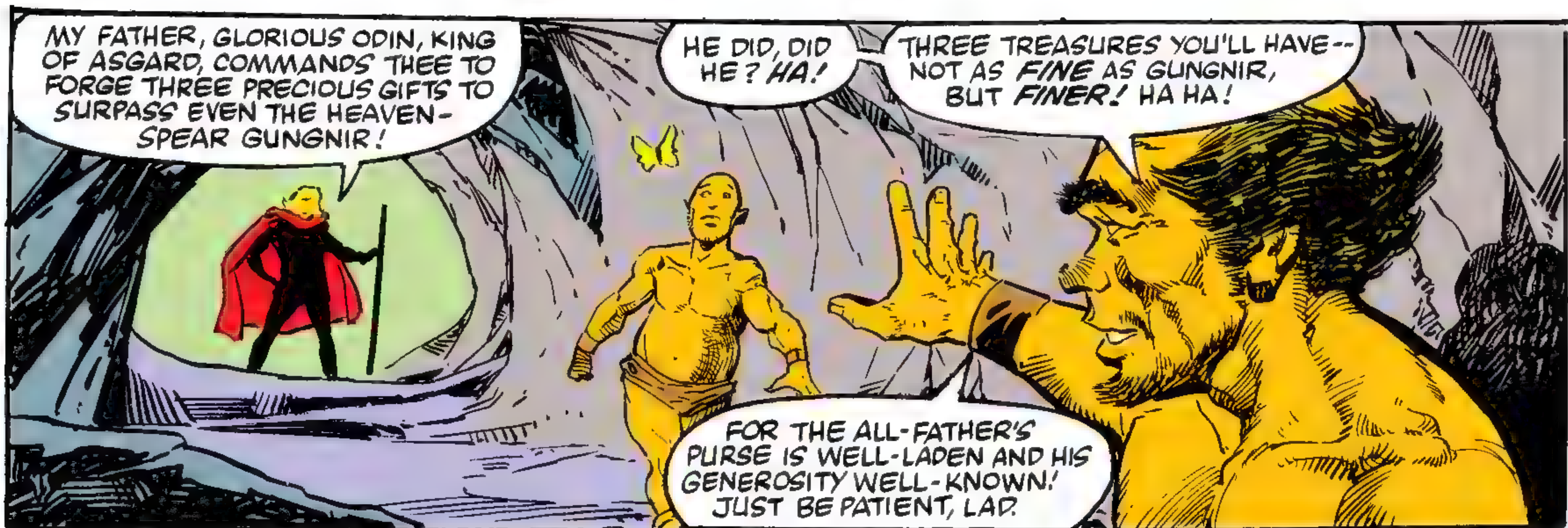


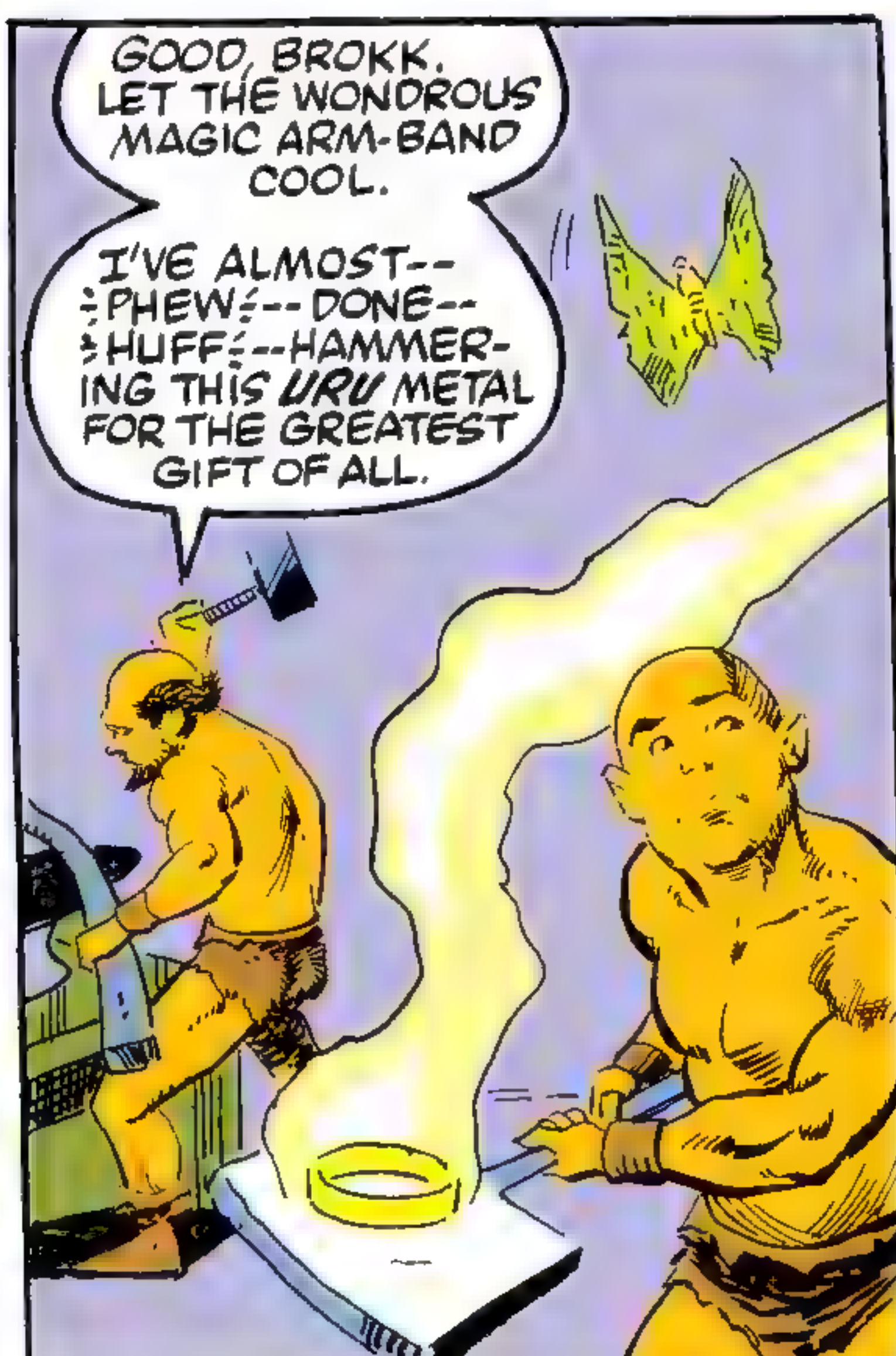
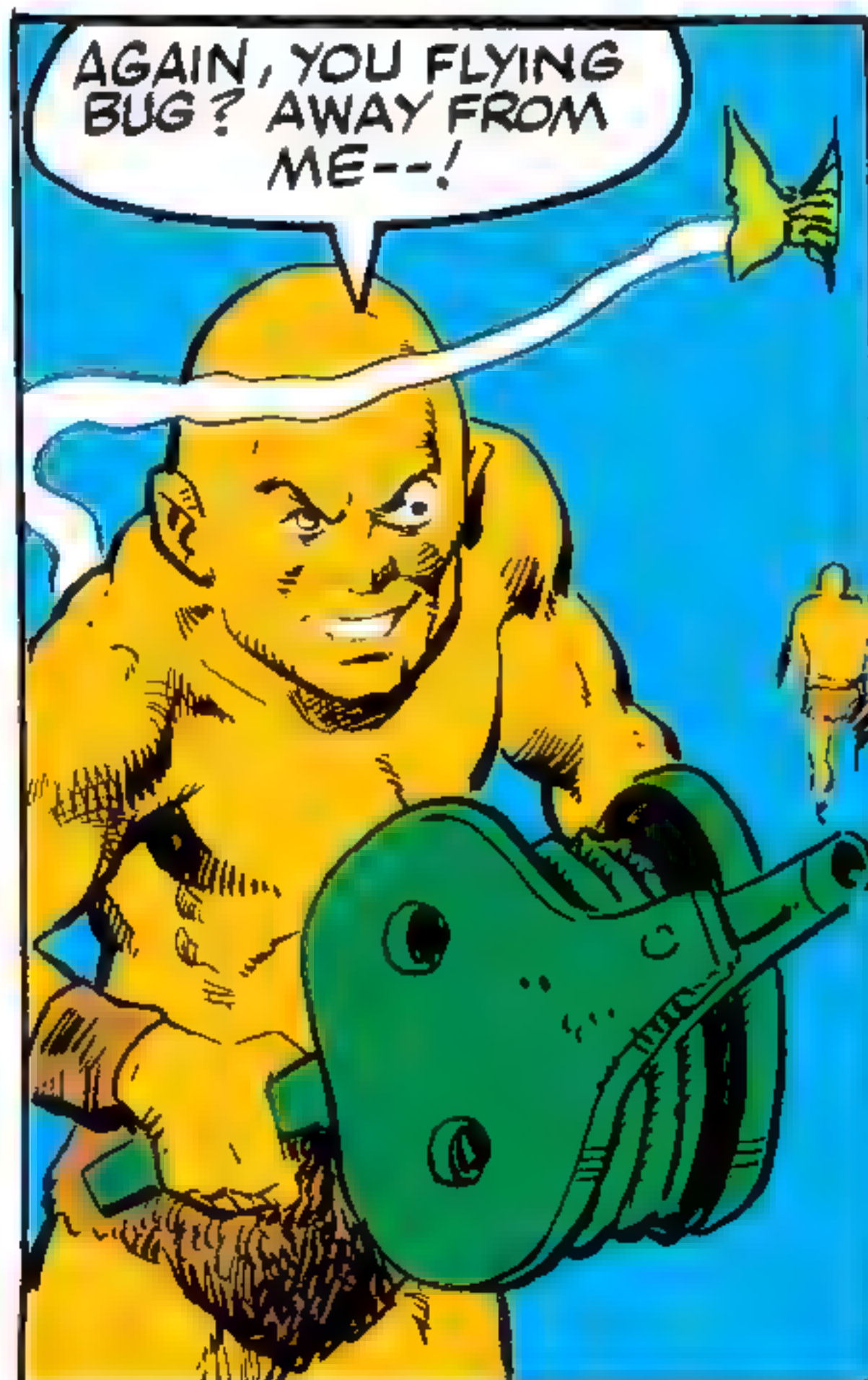
GUNGNIR--
A MAGIC
SPEAR OF
HEAVEN!

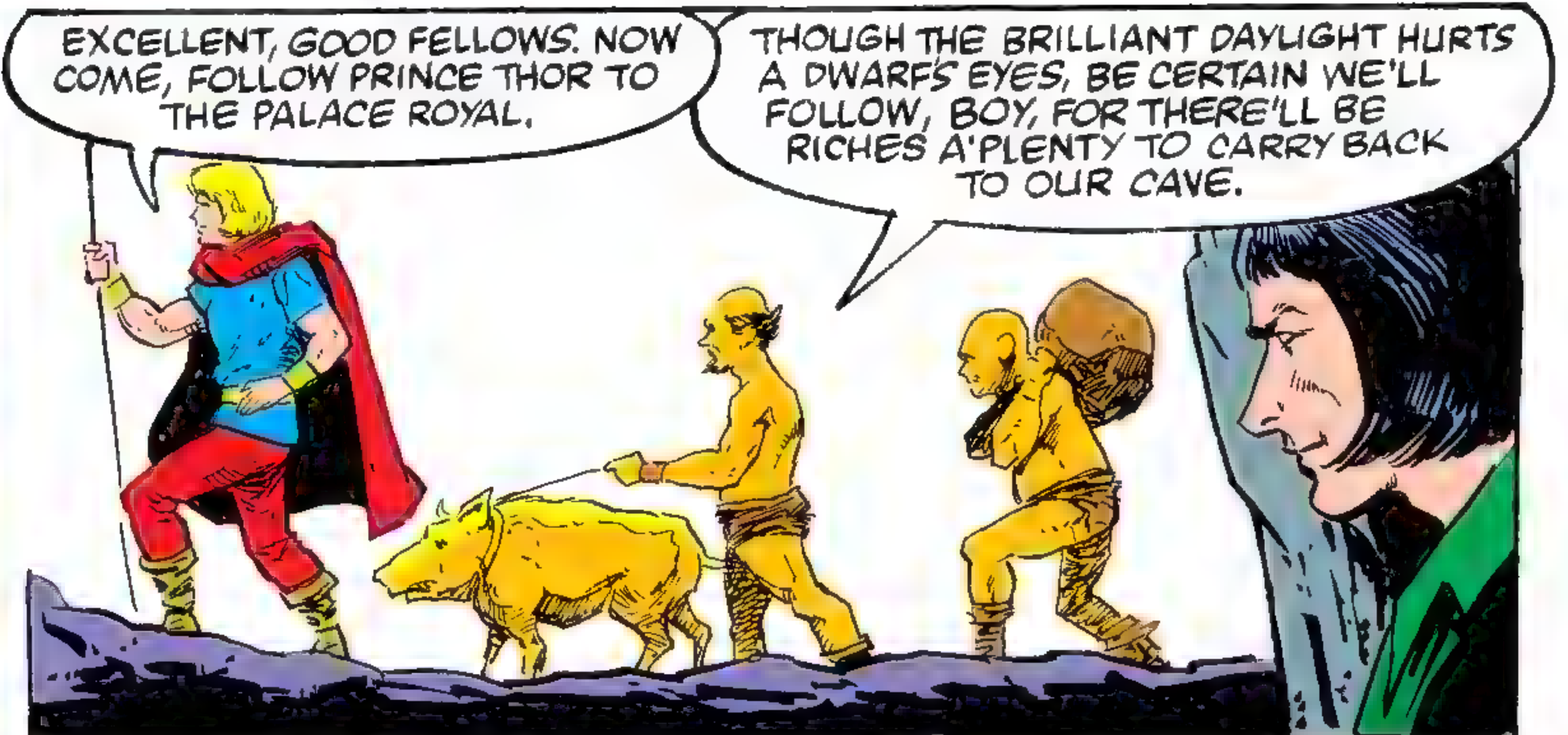
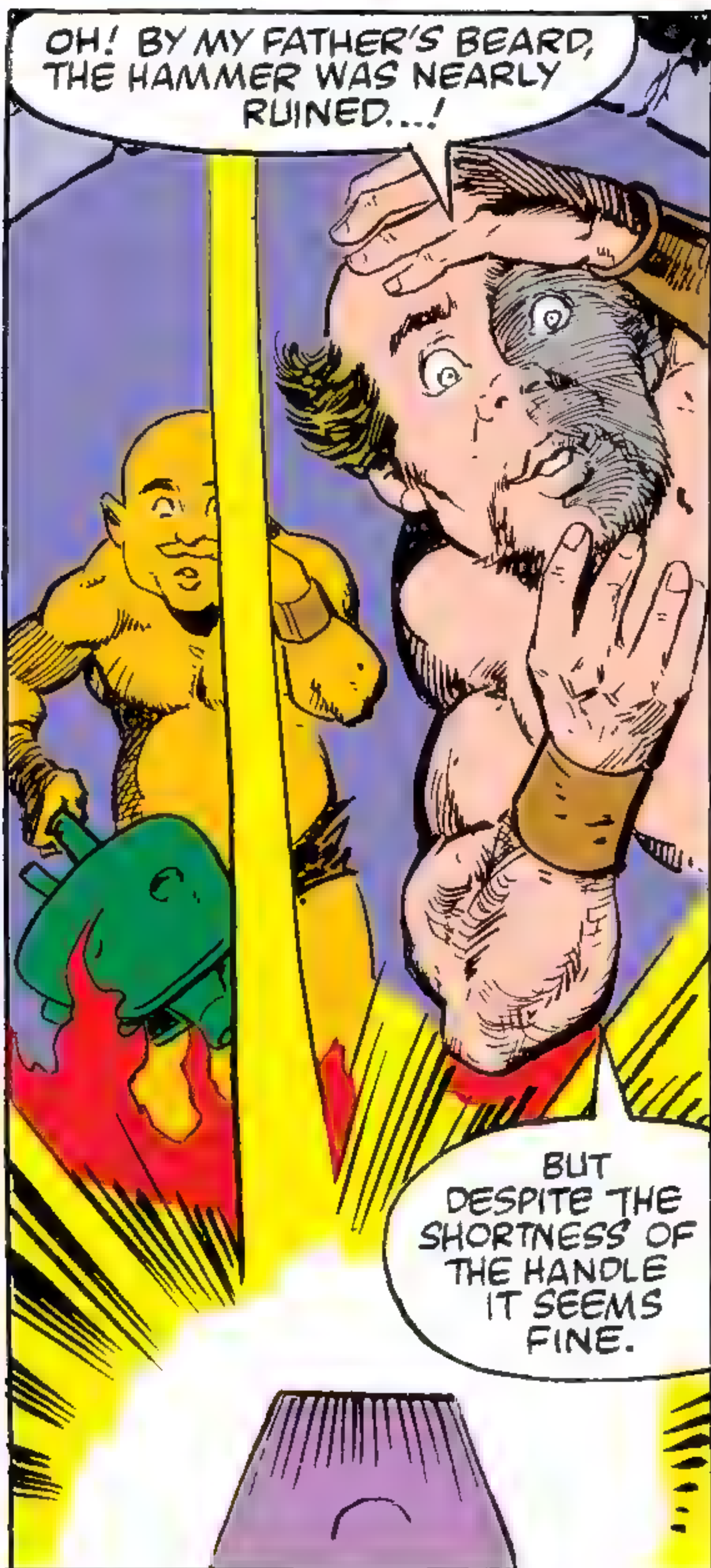
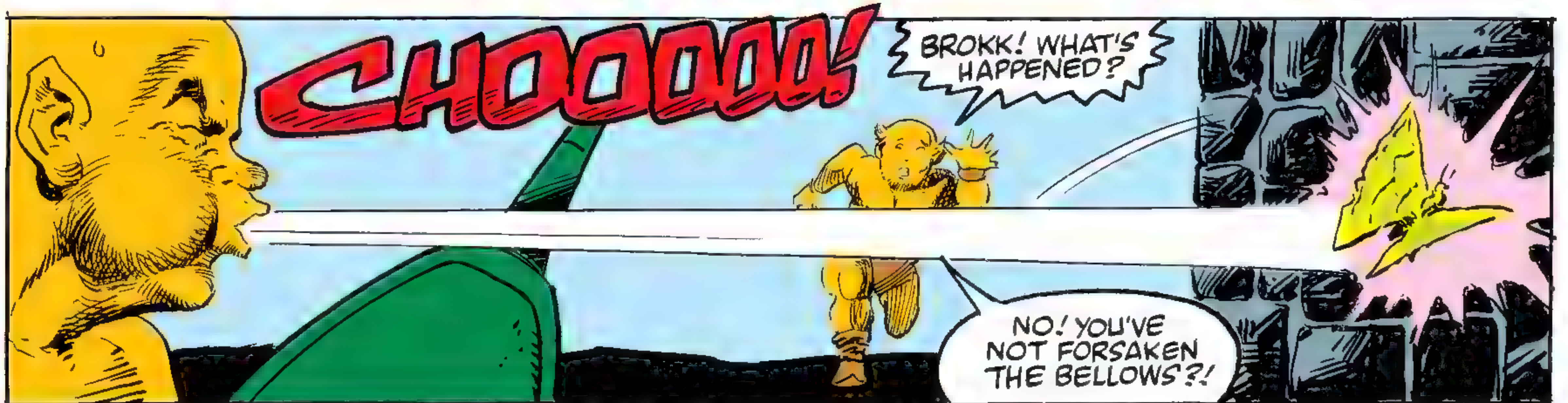
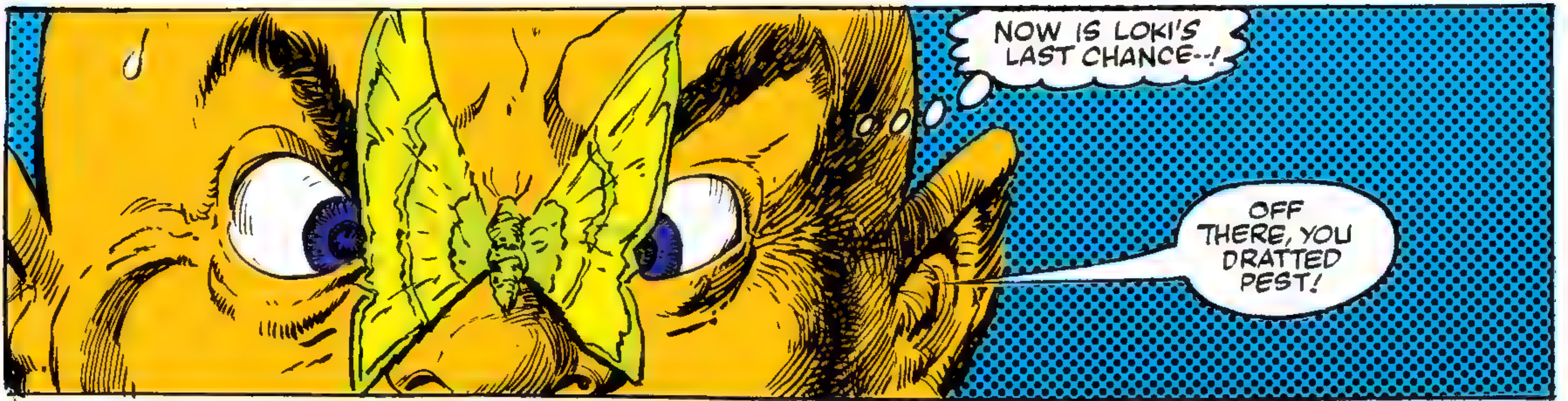


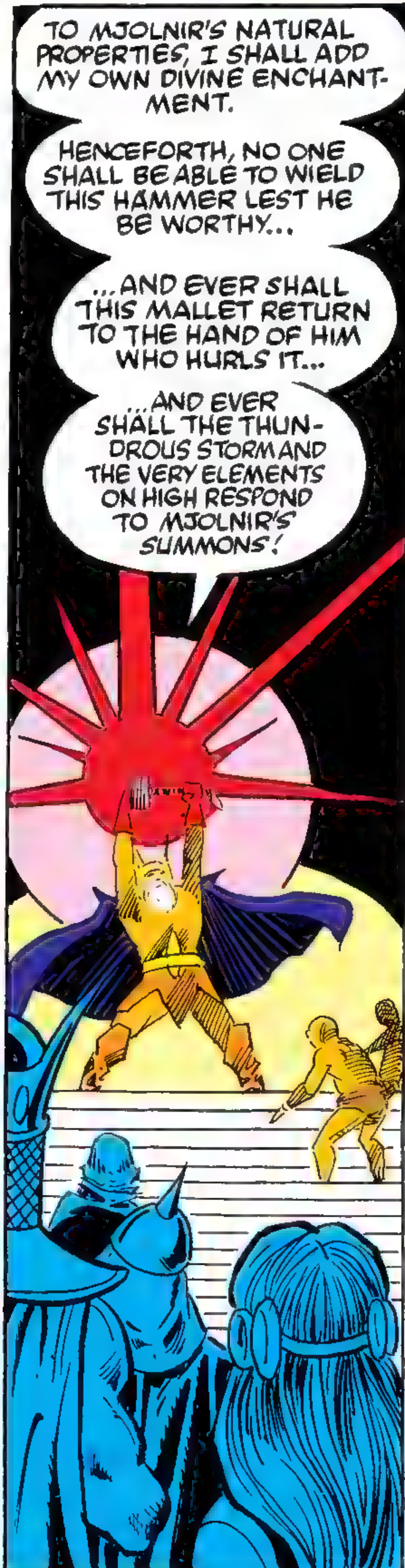
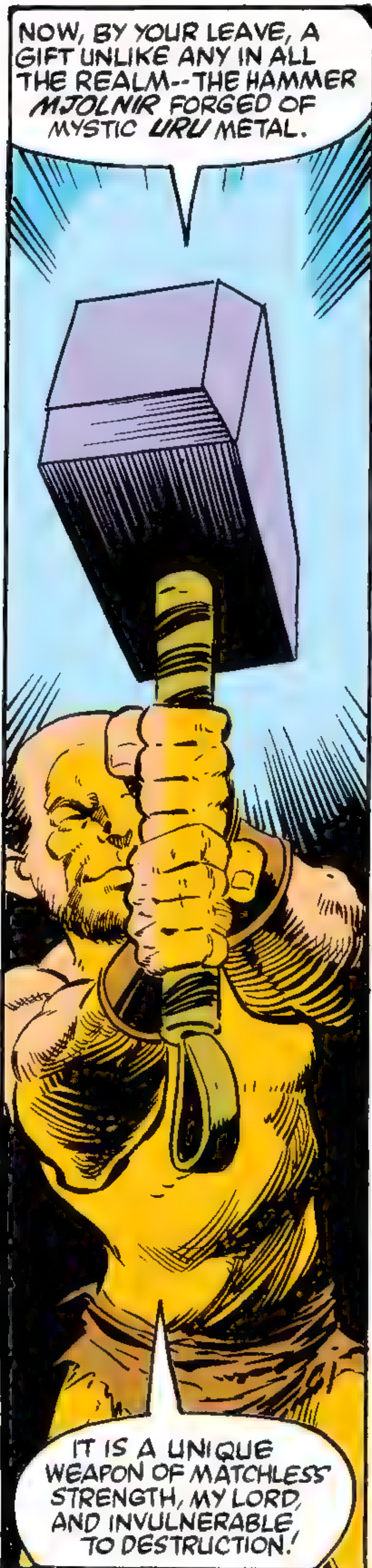
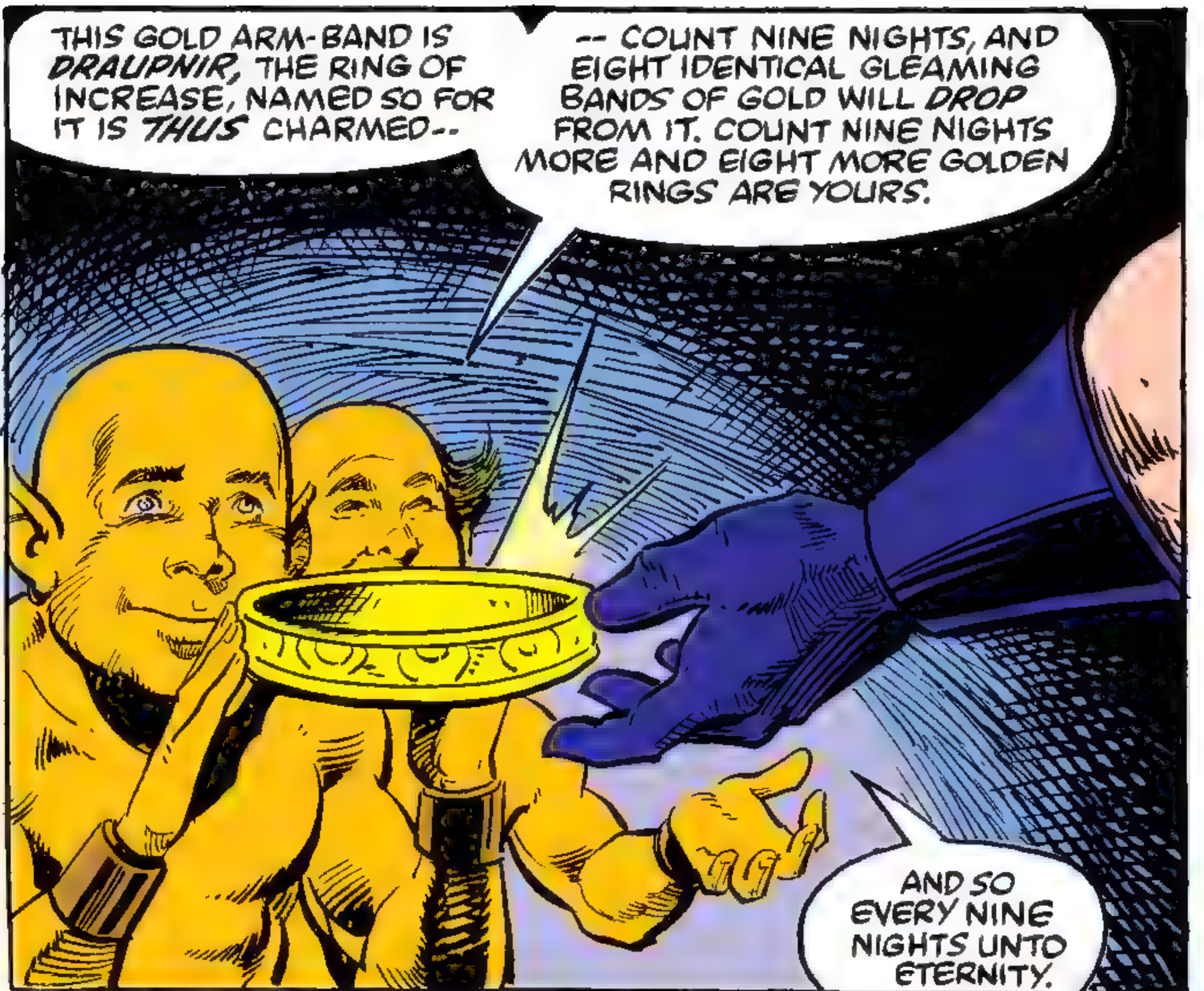
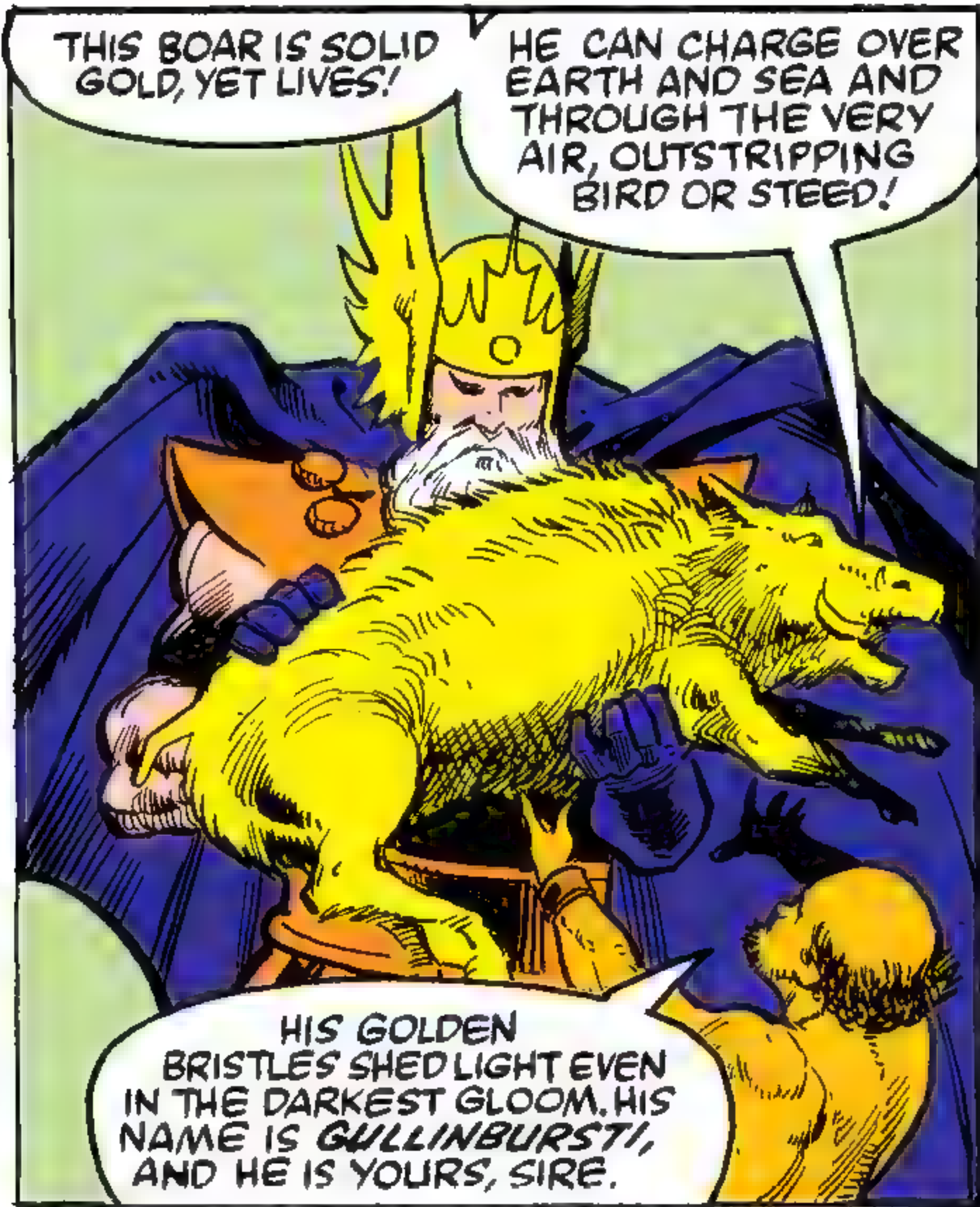












CHAPTER
III

THE WINNING OF MJOLNIR

"MARK, SISTERS, MARK WELL, FOR THIS WAS A GLORIOUS DAY IN YOUNG THOR'S LIFETIME..."

"...THIS EVENING WE SHALL HONOR HIM WHO HAS GROWN A WARRIOR OF RENOWN AND GLORIOUS PRINCE AMONG US, MY OWN TRUE BLOODSON, THE MIGHTY THOR."

"WHO IS THERE WHO DWELLS ON HIGH THAT EVER CAN FORGET THE SHAMEFUL DAY WHEN STEALTHY STORM GIANTS STOLE THE GOLDEN APPLES OF IMMORTALITY?"

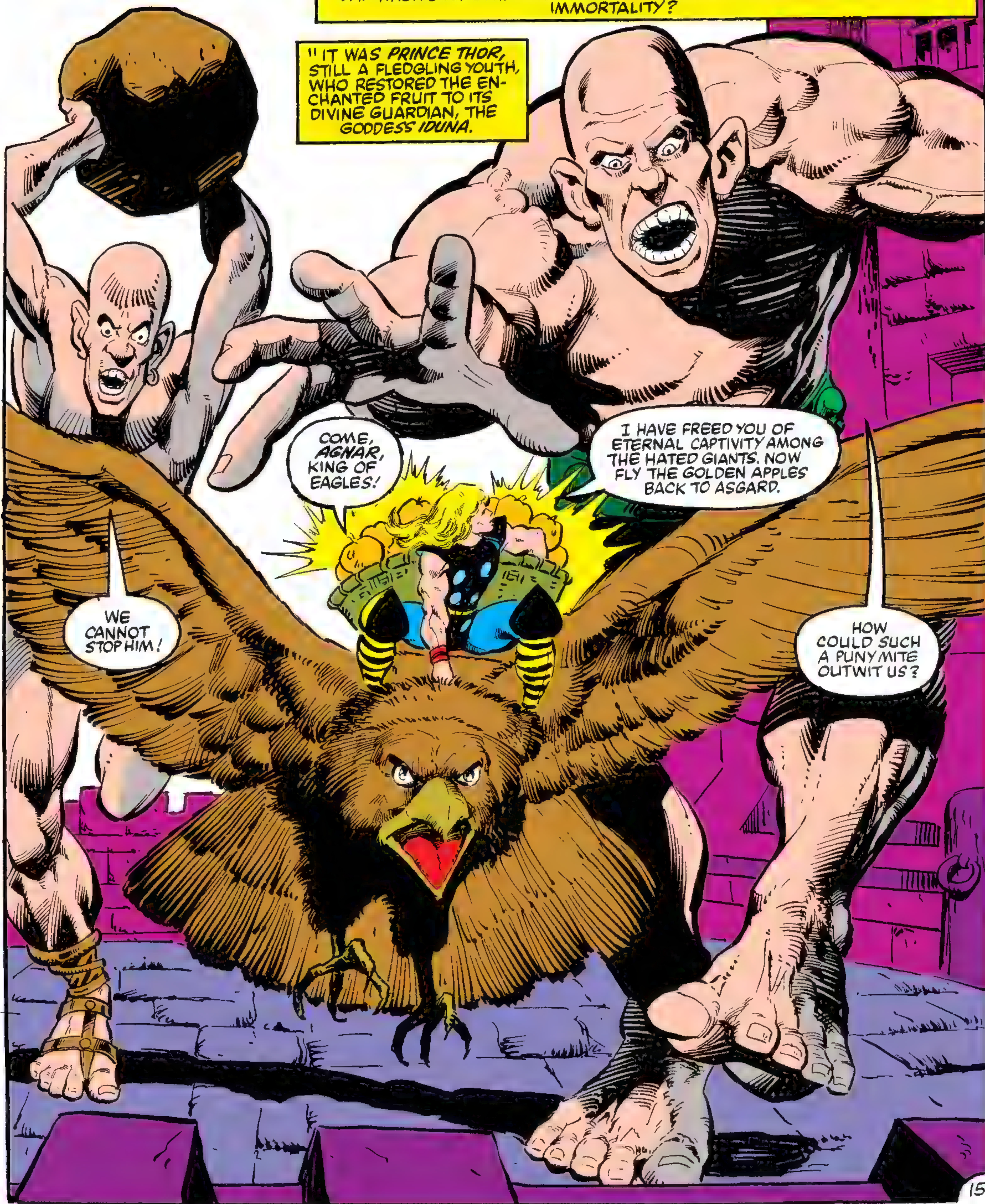
"IT WAS PRINCE THOR, STILL A FLEDGLING YOUTH, WHO RESTORED THE ENCHANTED FRUIT TO ITS DIVINE GUARDIAN, THE GODDESS IDUNA."

COME, AGNAR, KING OF EAGLES!

I HAVE FREED YOU OF ETERNAL CAPTIVITY AMONG THE HATED GIANTS. NOW FLY THE GOLDEN APPLES BACK TO ASGARD.

WE CANNOT STOP HIM!

HOW COULD SUCH A PUNY MITE OUTWIT US?





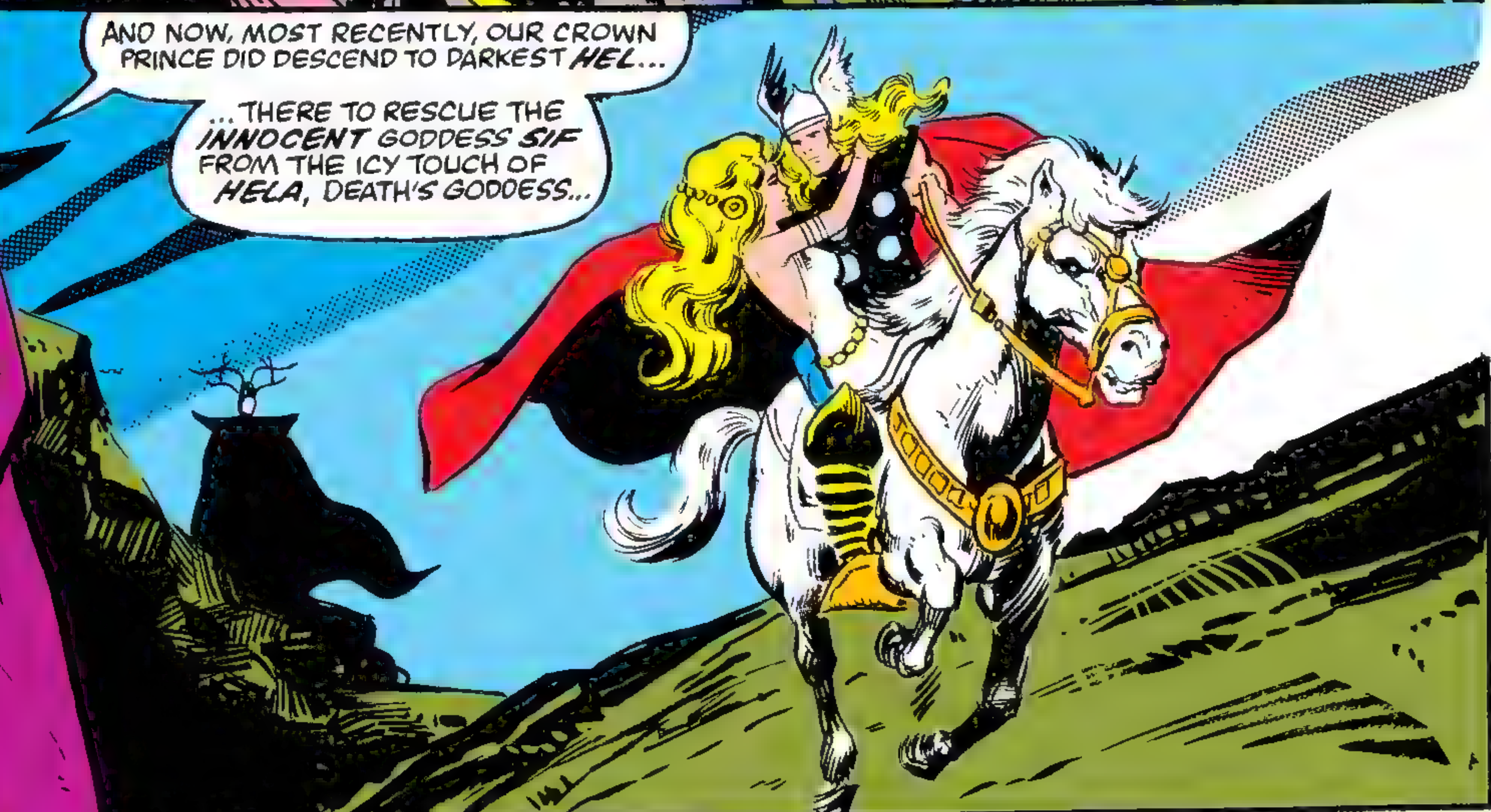
"OR IS THERE ANY AMONG US WHO HAS NOT HEARD OF THE VALIANT DEFENSE OF YOUNG PRINCE THOR, SINGLE-HANDED AGAINST THE INVADING **FORCES OF EVIL**?"

BE WARNED, FOES! I SHALL PROTECT ASGARD TO THE LAST DROP OF MY LIFE'S BLOOD!



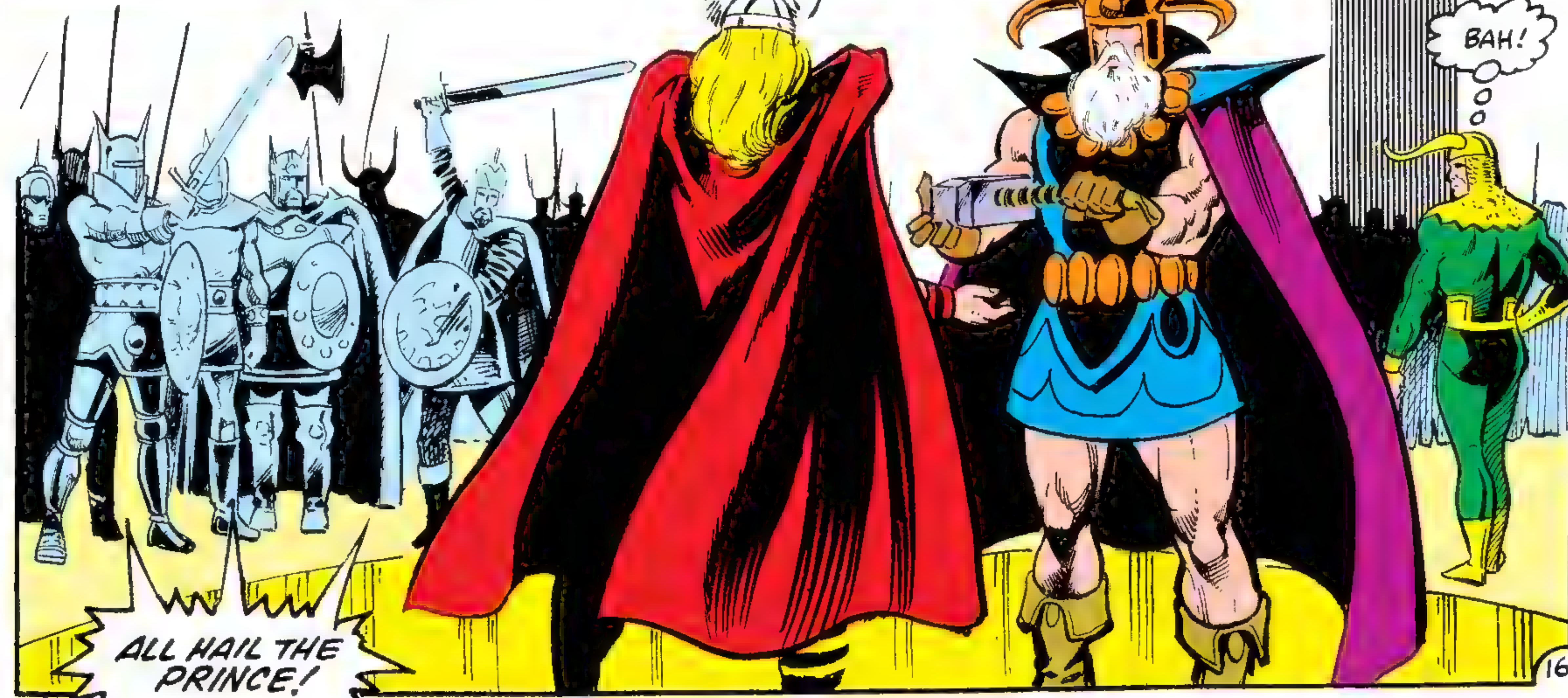
AND NOW, MOST RECENTLY, OUR CROWN PRINCE DID DESCEND TO DARKEST **HEL**...

... THERE TO RESCUE THE INNOCENT GODDESS **SIF** FROM THE ICY TOUCH OF **HELA**, DEATH'S GODDESS...



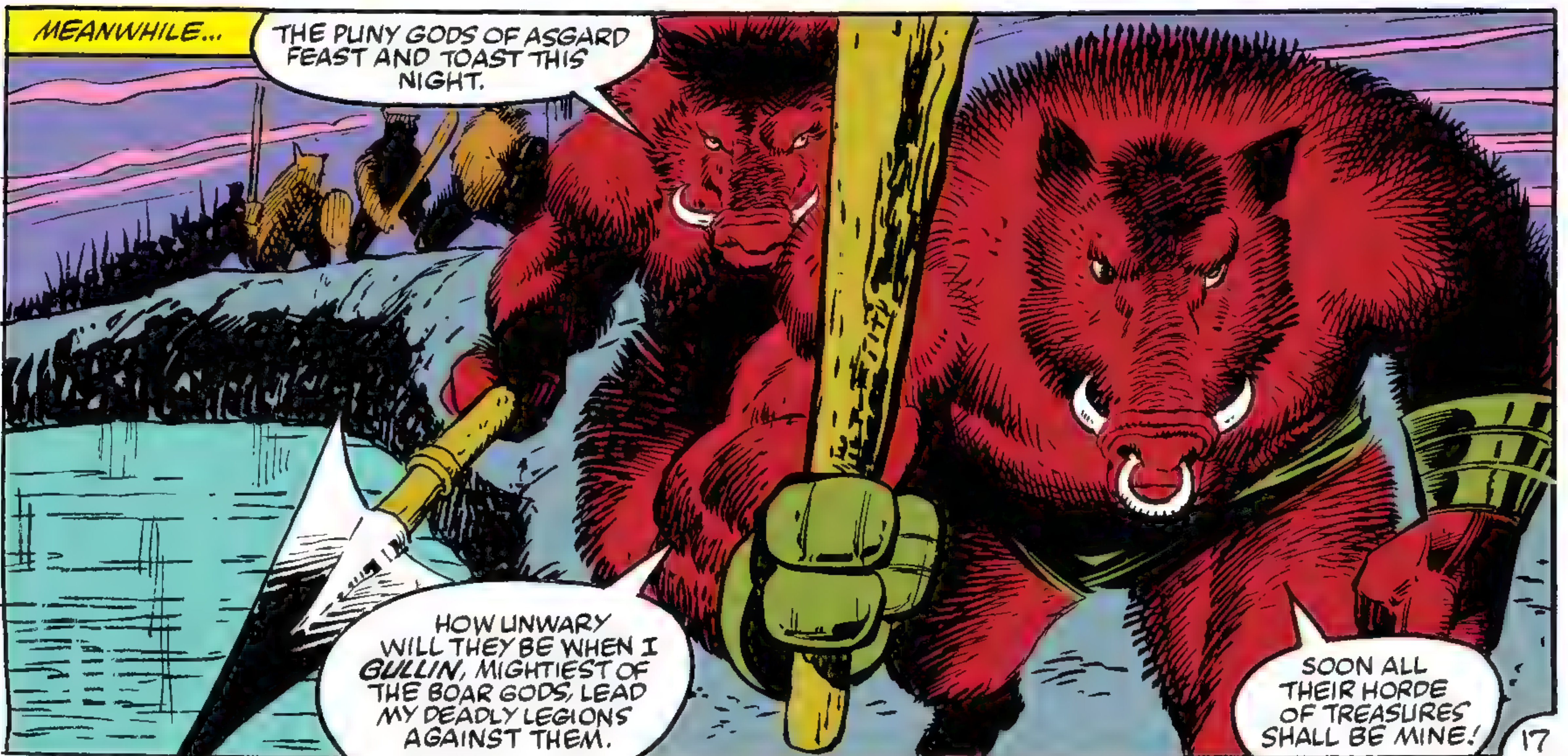
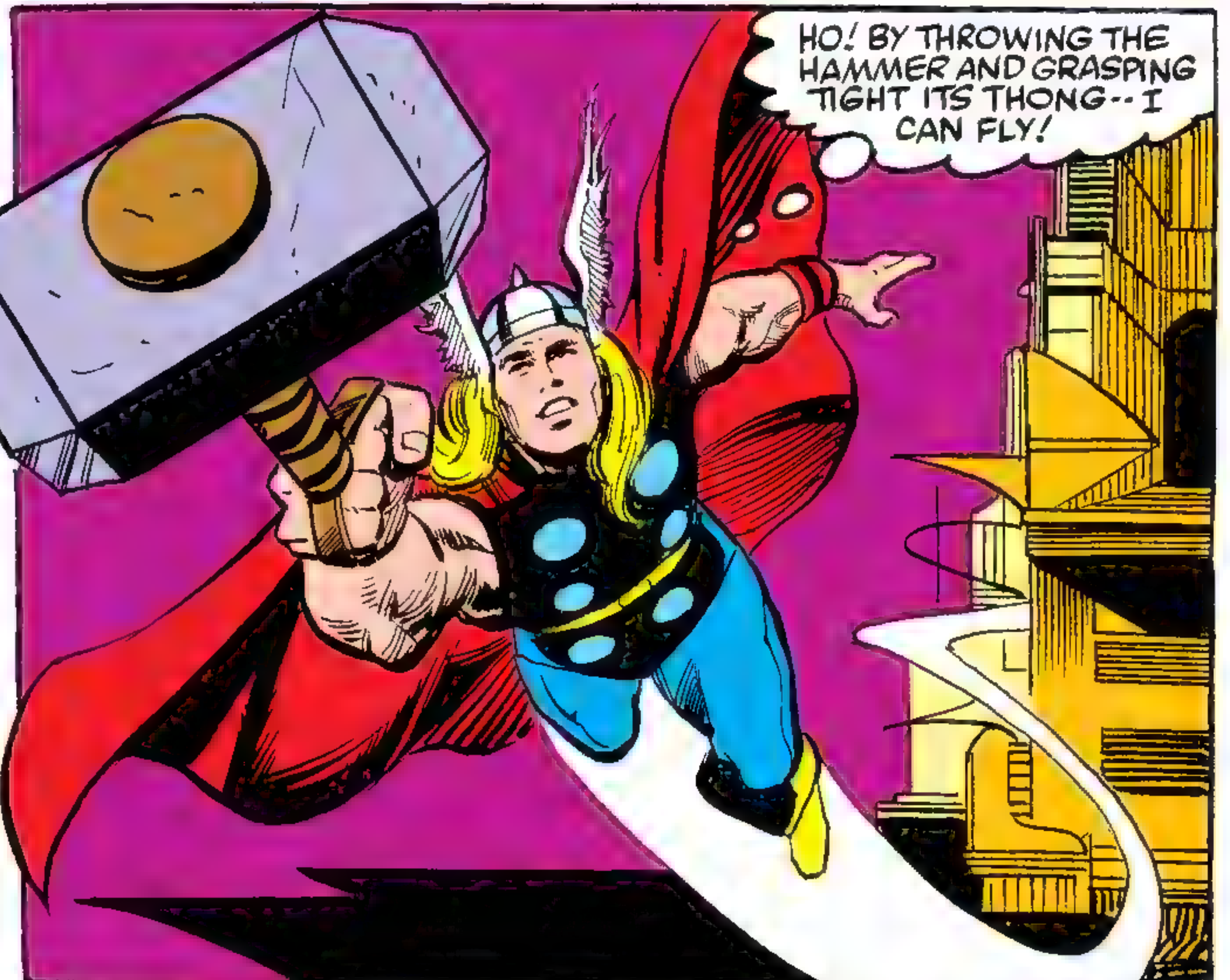
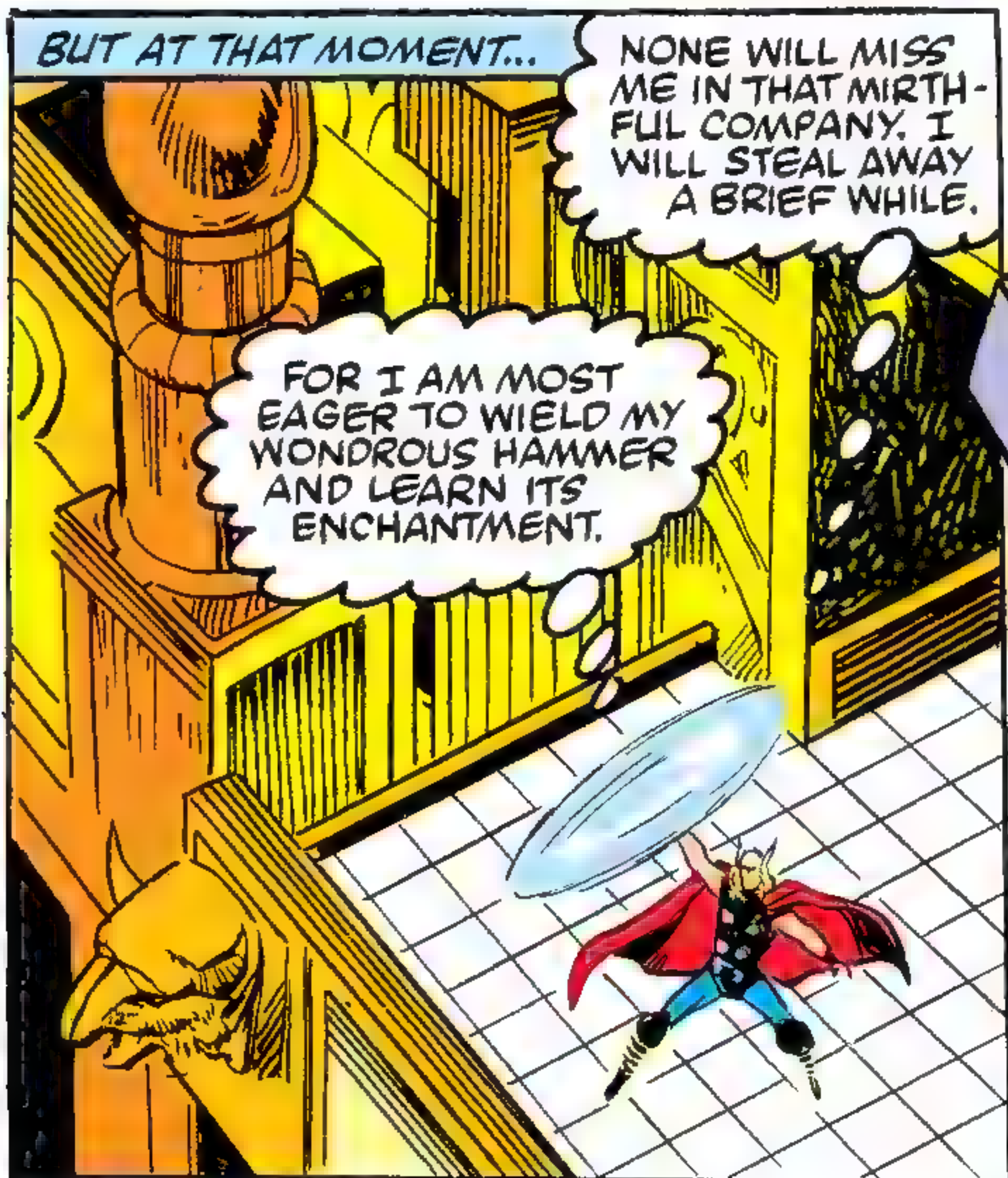
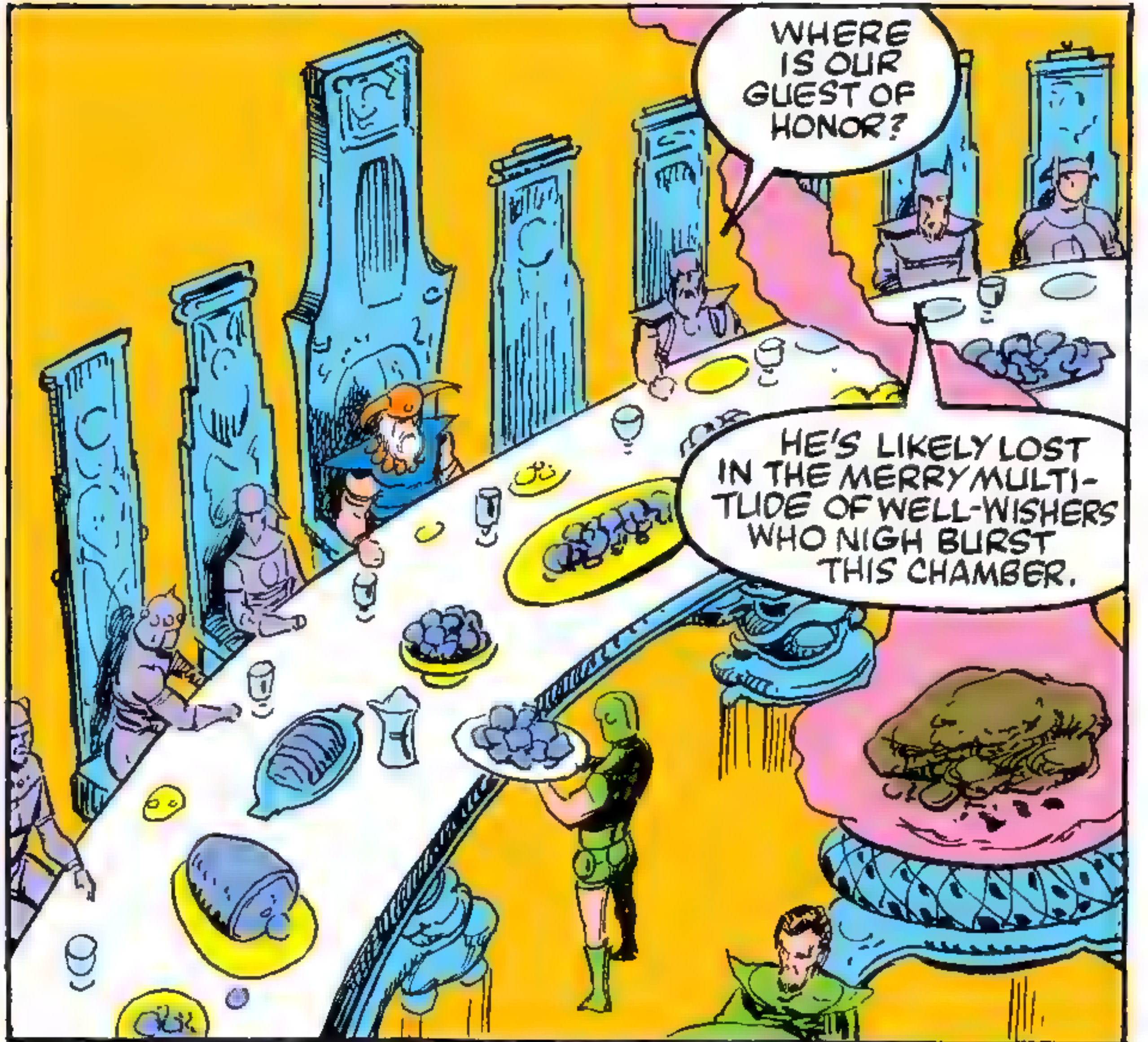
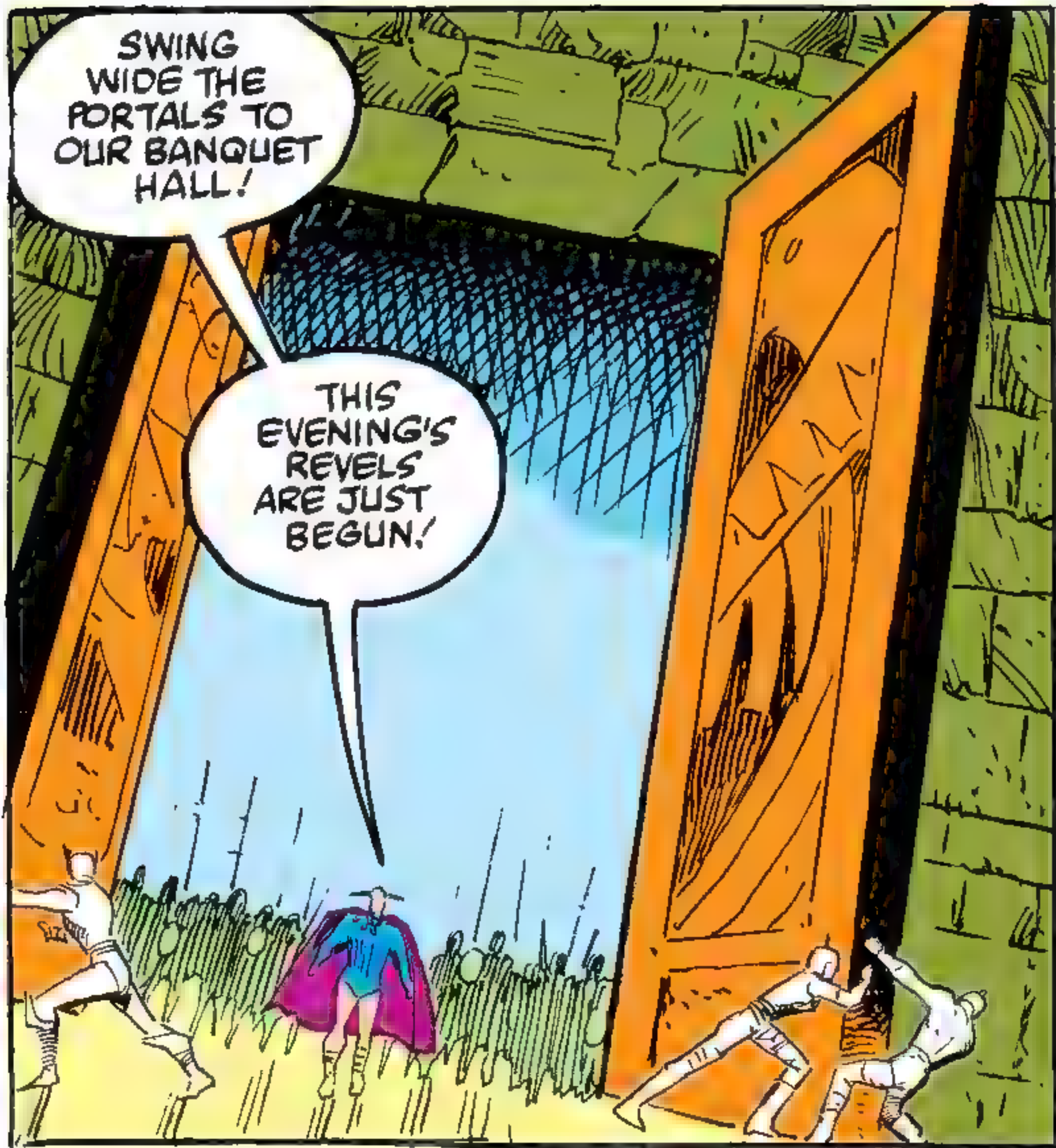
FOR THESE AND OTHER DEEDS OF SELFLESS VALOR COUNTLESS AS THE HEAVEN'S STARS...

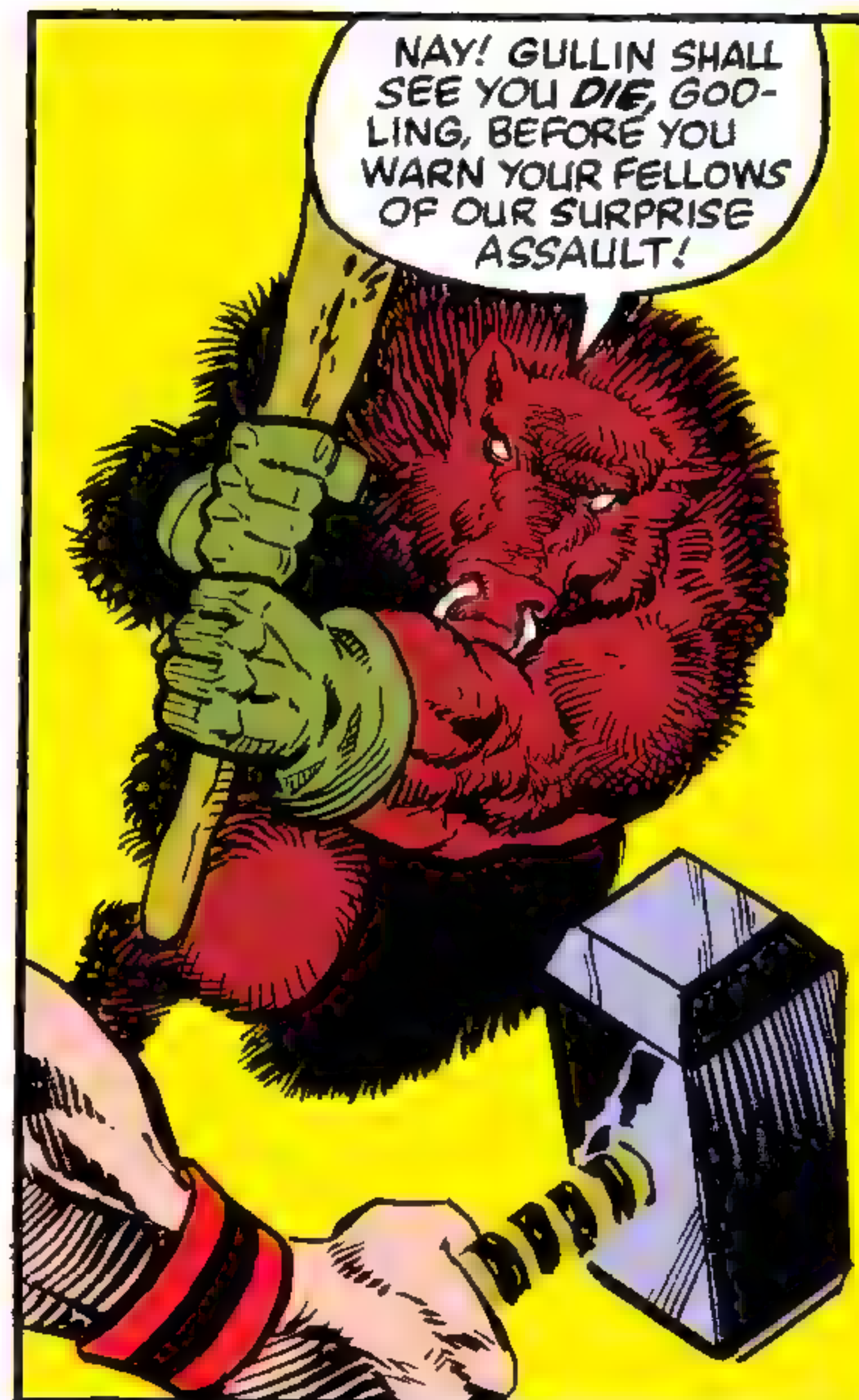
... ENCHANTED **MJOLNIR** IS YOURS TO WIELD WITH CARE, BOLD **THOR**, ASGARD'S HEIR APPARENT AND MY DEVOTED SON!

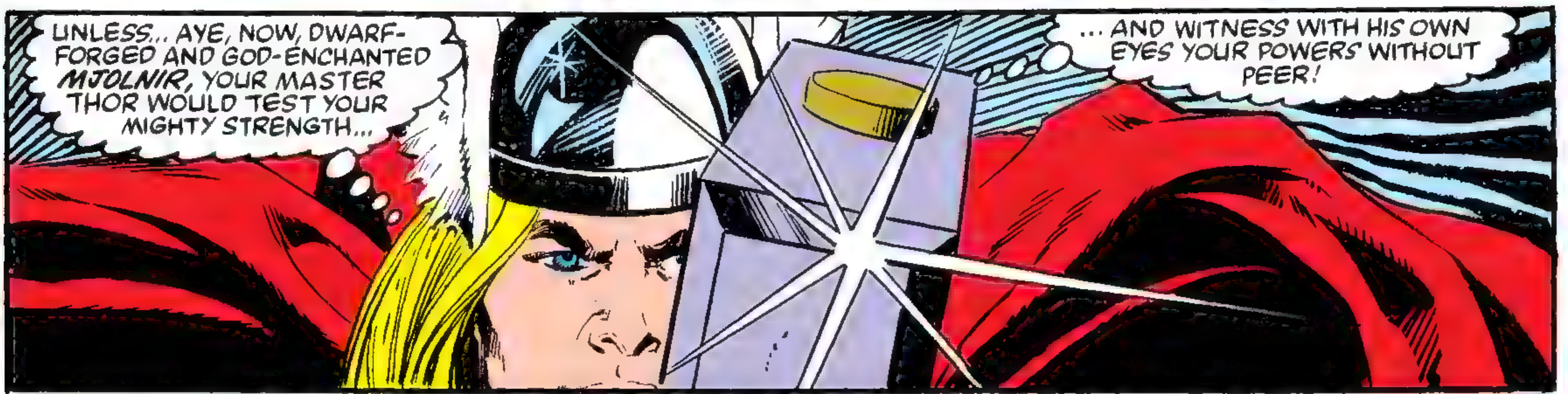
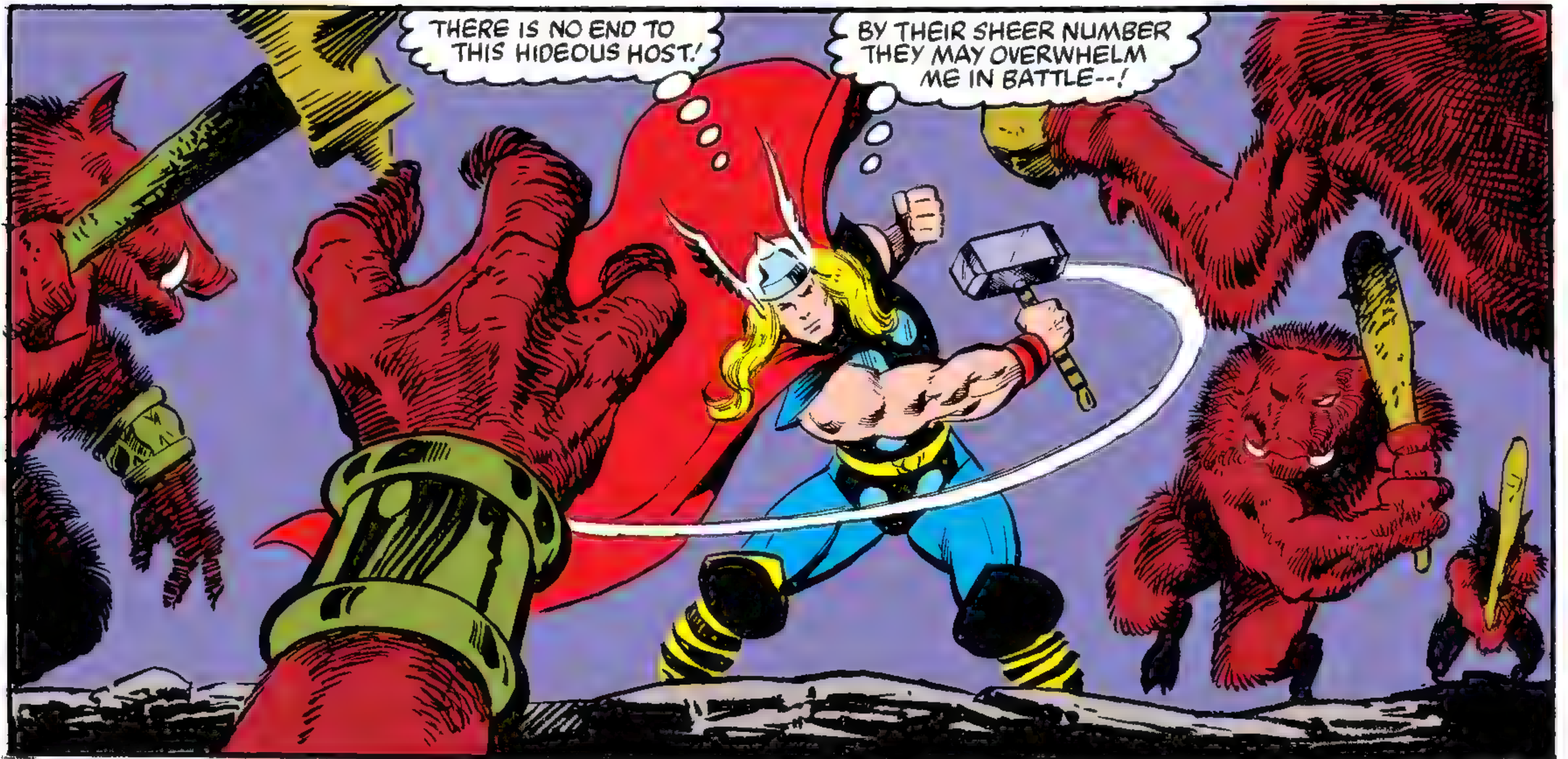


ALL HAIL THE PRINCE!

BAH!







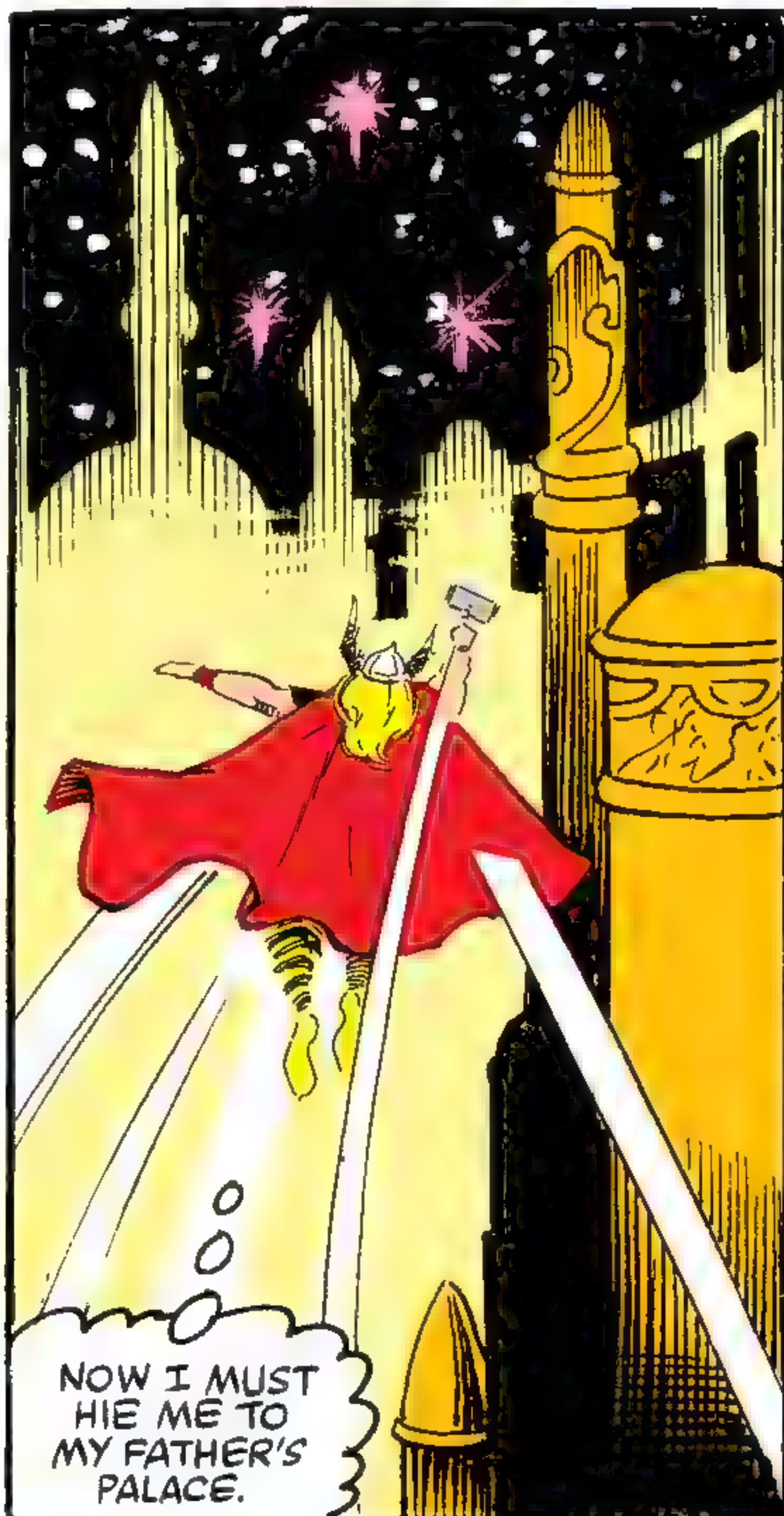


HA! YOUR VAUNTED SCHEMES AGAINST ODIN'S KINGDOM HAVE BROUGHT YOU NAUGHT BUT A DRENCHING IN THE COLD WATERS OF THE TORRENT, GULLIN!

BE CERTAIN THAT HENCEFORTH ASGARD SHALL BE EVER MORE VIGILANT AGAINST YOUR KIND.



BOAST NOT, BRASH THOR! FOR WE WILL FIGHT TO THE END OF DAYS IF NEED BE TILL WE HAVE OVERCOME YOUR REALM!



NOW I MUST HIE ME TO MY FATHER'S PALACE.



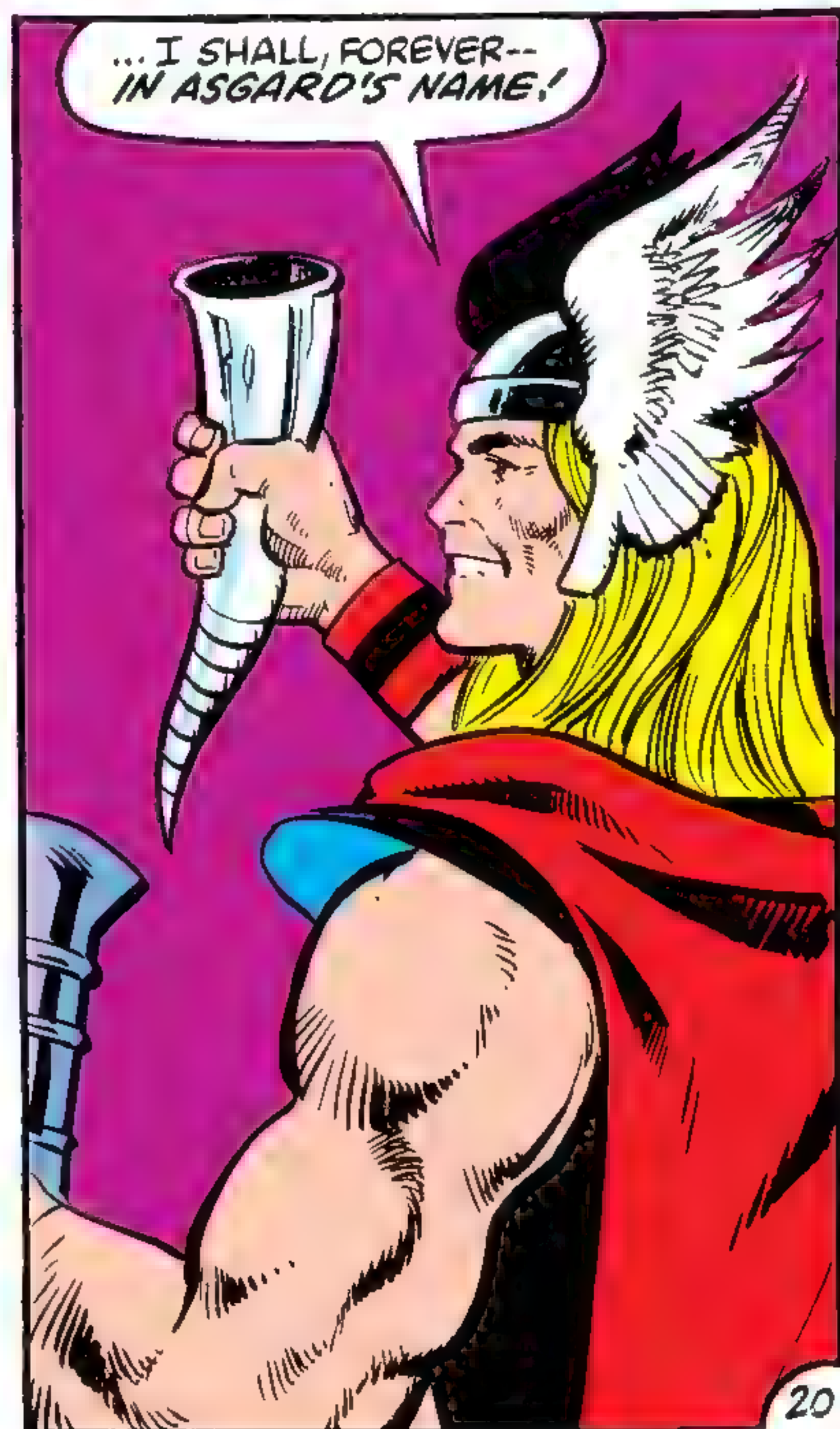
AH, HERE'S THE PRINCE!

TO THOR! MAY HE SOON WIELD HIS HAMMER PROUDLY--



-- IN ASGARD'S NAME!

HA! THAT I HAVE ALREADY DONE AND...



... I SHALL, FOREVER-- IN ASGARD'S NAME!

The Mischief of Loki Against Sif

CHAPTER IV

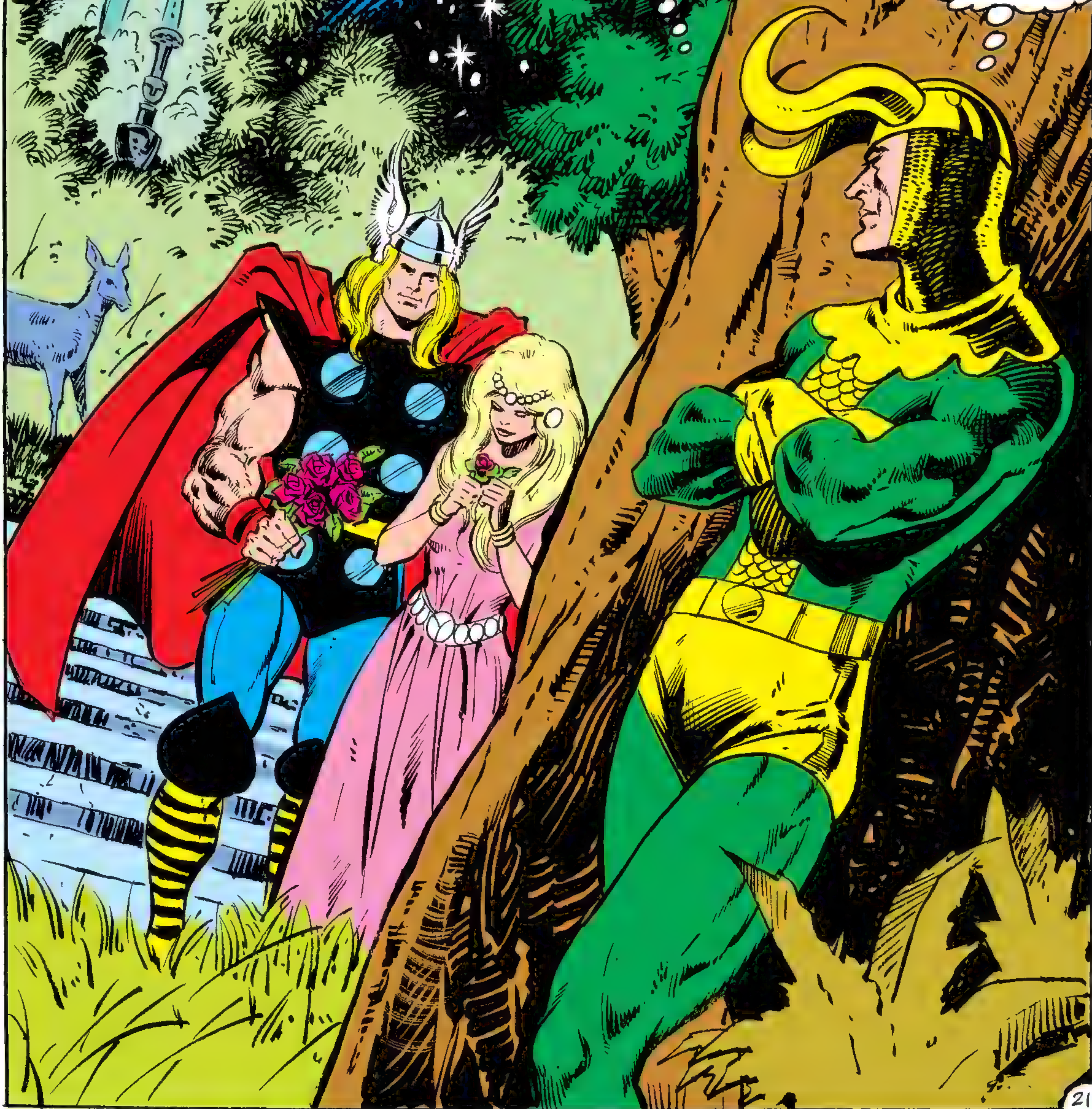
"DO YOU RECALL THIS
PRESENT IMAGE, SISTERS?"

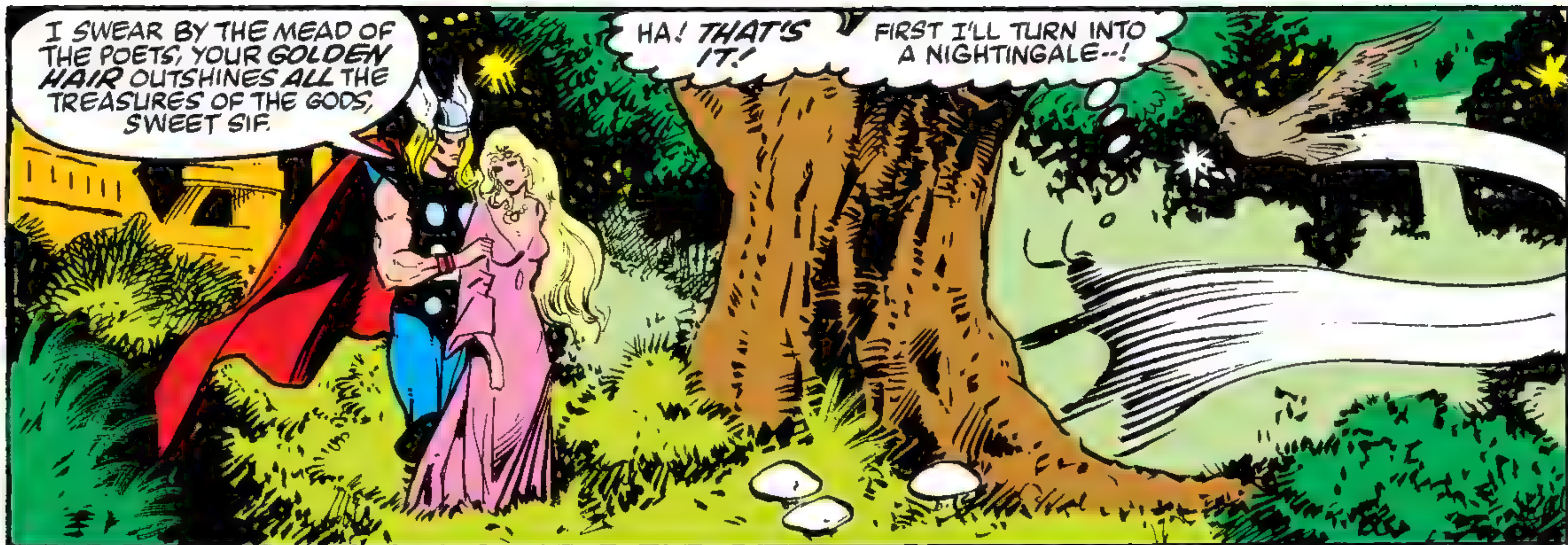
"AYE, 'T WAS BEFORE THE
PRINCE HAD SEEN TWENTY
SUMMERS, AN AGE WHEN
YOUNG MEN TOY WITH
MAIDENS' HEARTS..."

JUST LOOK AT THE FOND
FOOLS! MY ACCURSED HALF-
BROTHER AND DEAR
SIF PRETEND TO BE IN
LOVE.

BAH! HOW
REVOLTING TO
SEE THE GLADSOME
COUNTEANCES
ON THOSE TWO.

LOKI MUST
FIND SOME
WAY TO REND
THESE COOING
SWEETHEARTS'
ASUNDER.





I SWEAR BY THE MEAD OF THE POETS, YOUR GOLDEN HAIR OUTSHINES ALL THE TREASURES OF THE GODS, SWEET SIF.

HA! THAT'S IT!

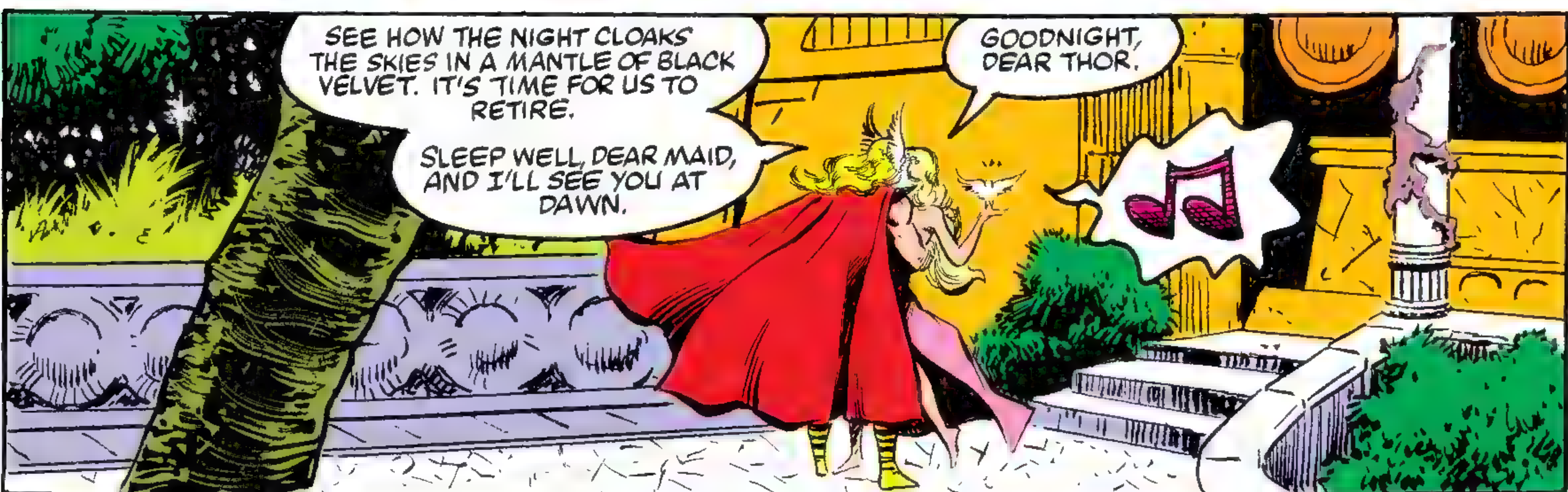
FIRST I'LL TURN INTO A NIGHTINGALE--!



A SONGBIRD, SIF. NO DOUBT IT SINGS YOUR BEAUTY.

VAIN IDIOTS!

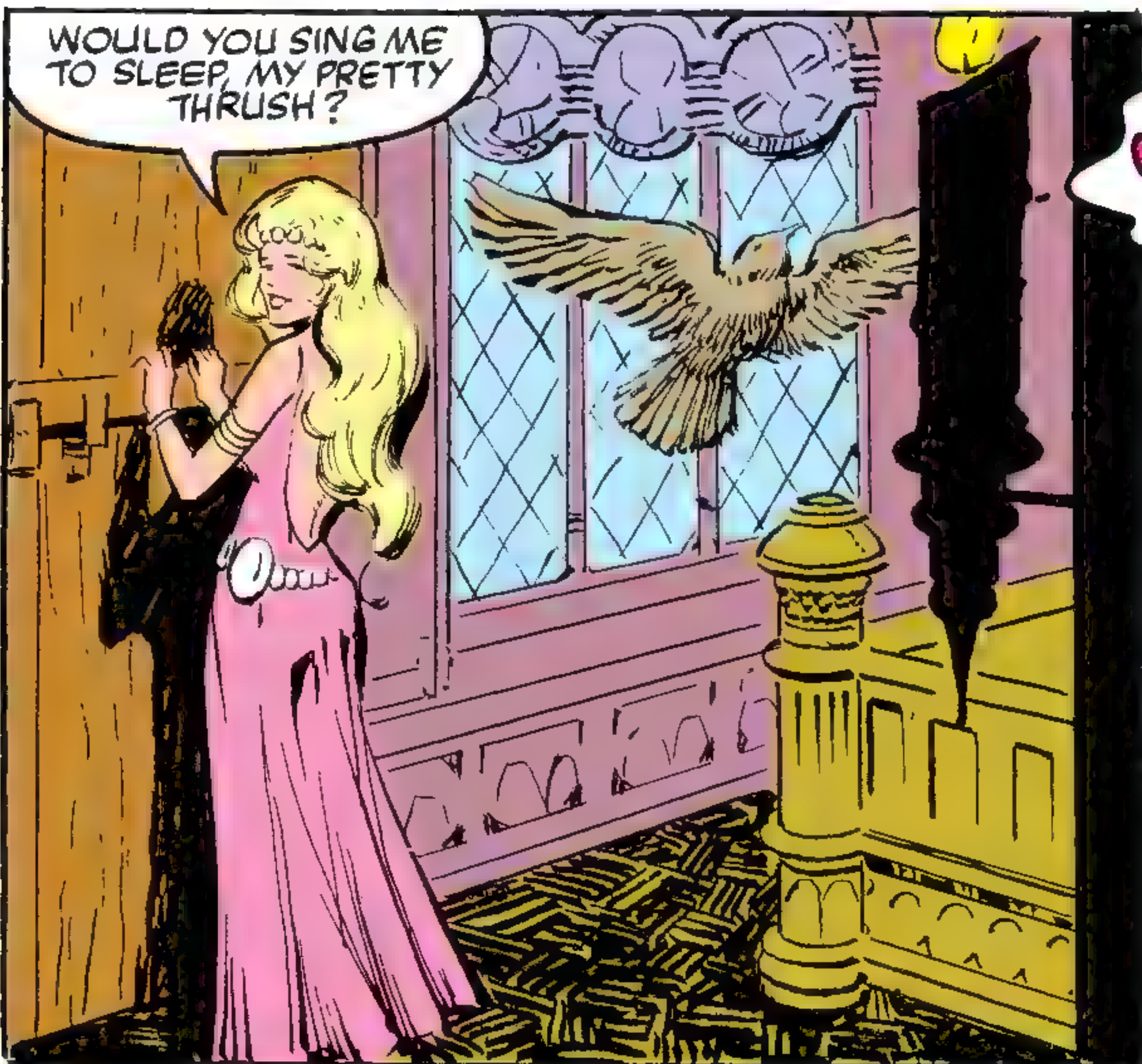
OR MAYHAP YOUR BRAVERY MY PRINCE.



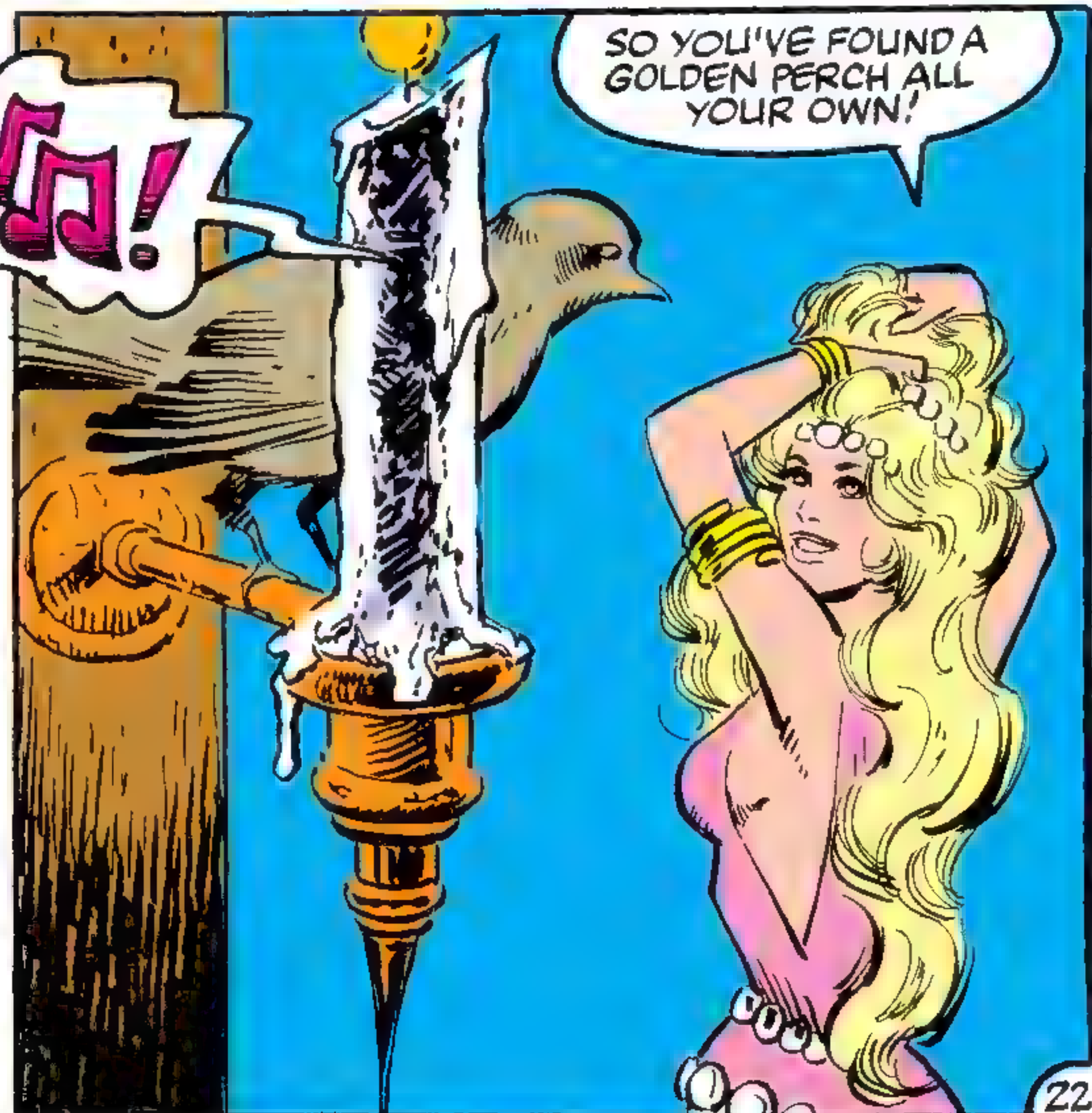
SEE HOW THE NIGHT CLOAKS THE SKIES IN A MANTLE OF BLACK VELVET. IT'S TIME FOR US TO RETIRE.

GOODNIGHT, DEAR THOR.

SLEEP WELL, DEAR MAID, AND I'LL SEE YOU AT DAWN.



WOULD YOU SING ME TO SLEEP MY PRETTY THRUSH?



SO YOU'VE FOUND A GOLDEN PERCH ALL YOUR OWN!



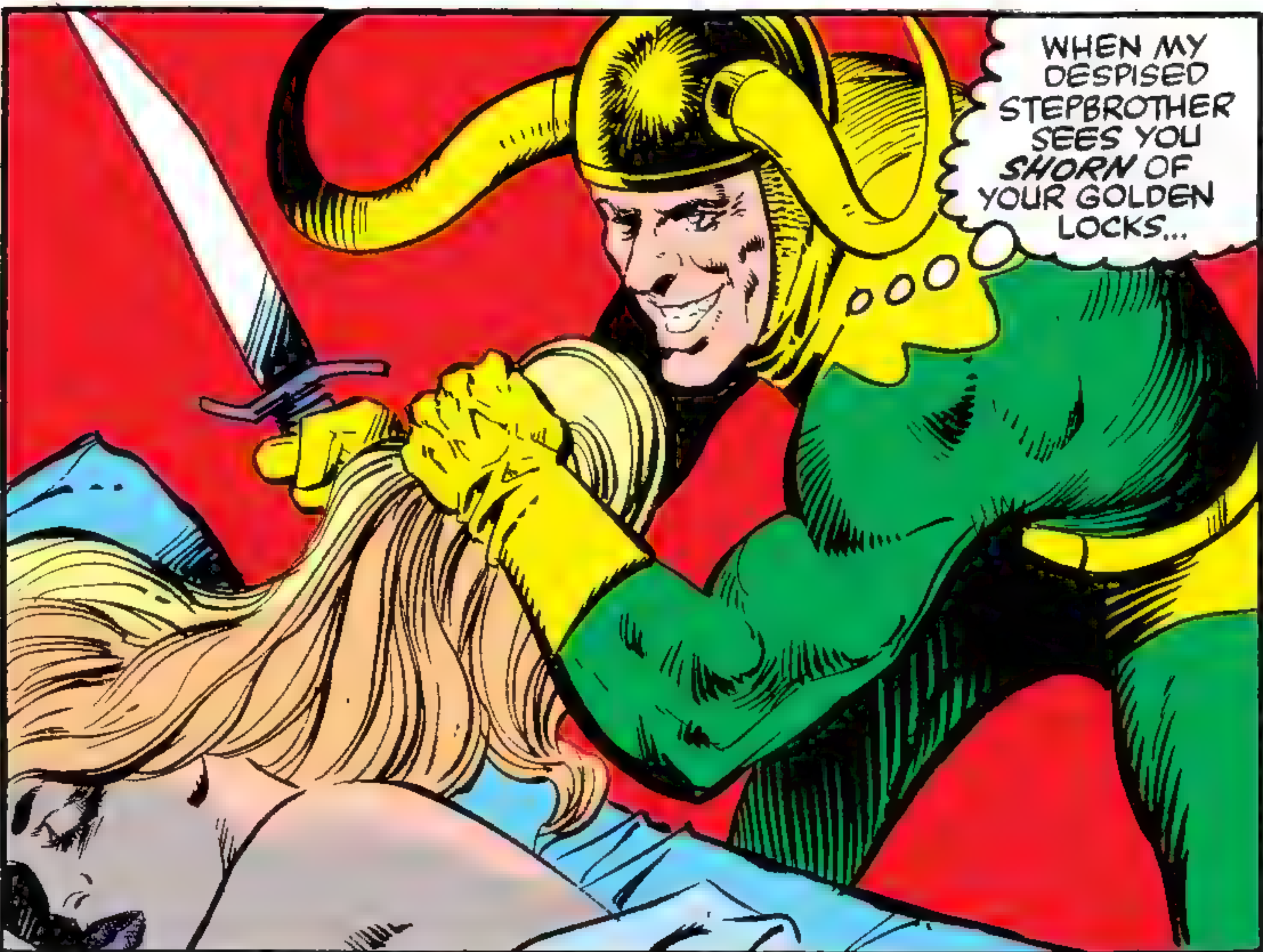
DREAM WHILE YOU
MAY ON YOUR DARLING
THOR, FOOLISH GIRL.



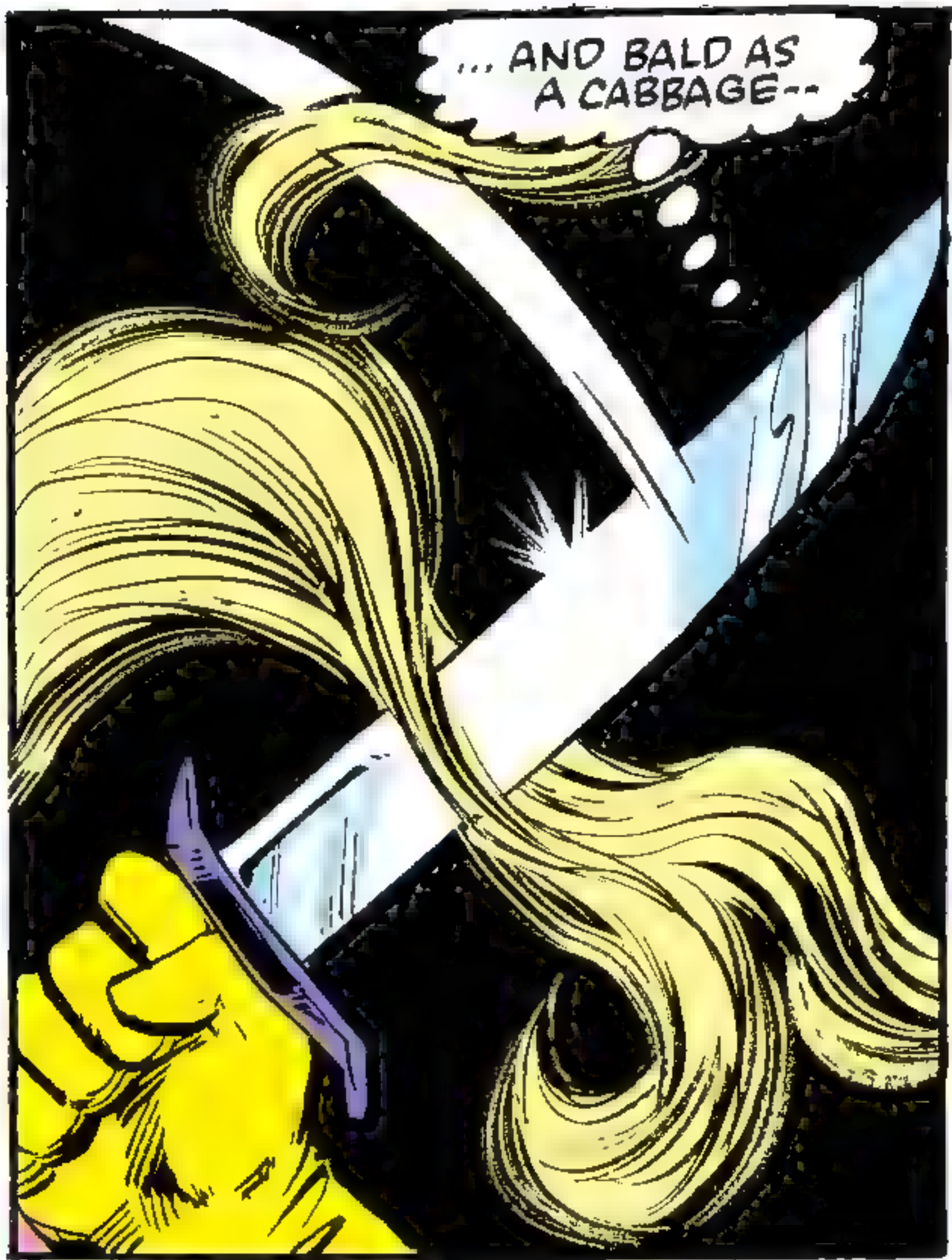
FOR COME
DAYLIGHT...



...YOU'LL HAVE
YOUR SUITOR
NO MORE.



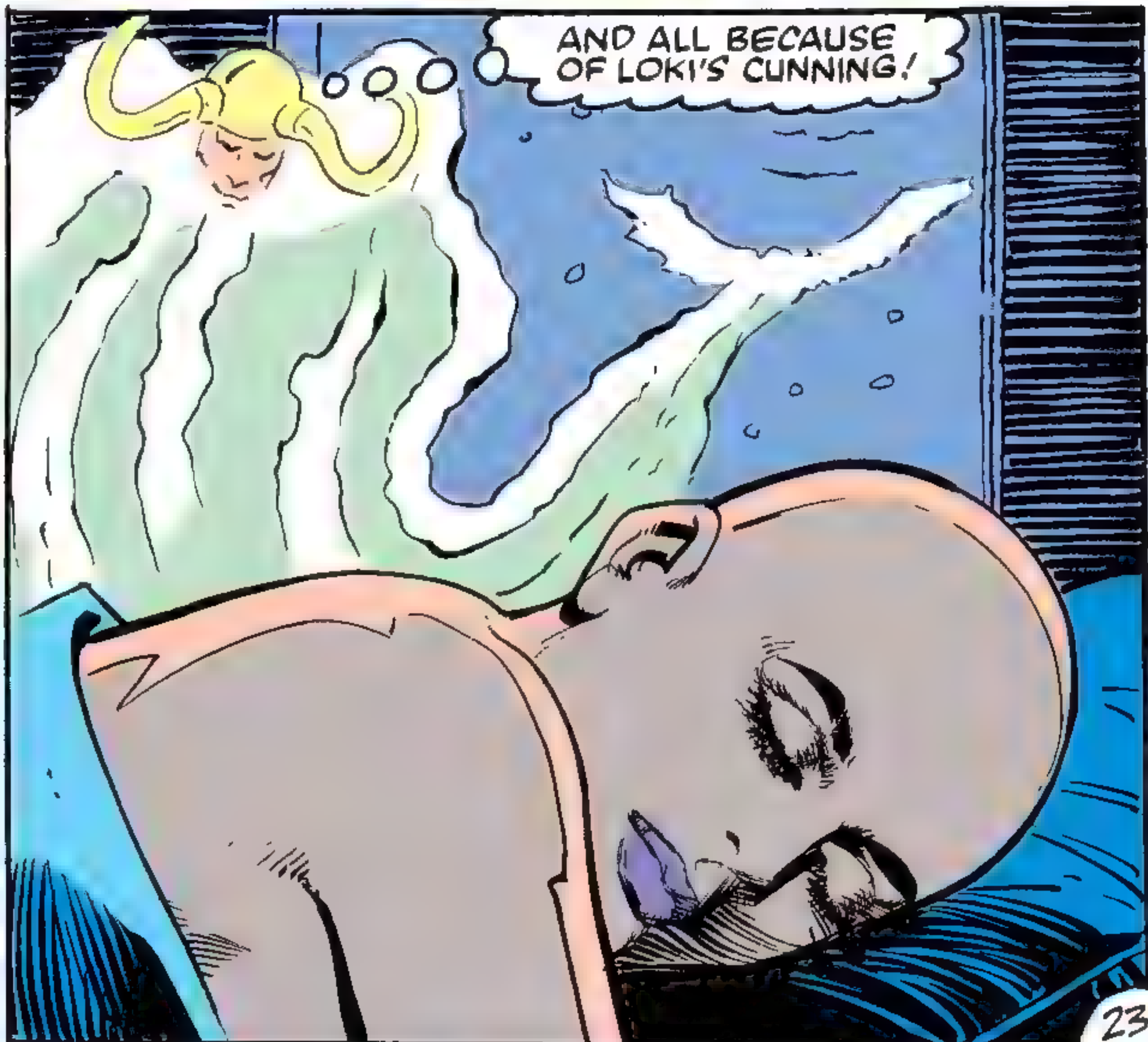
WHEN MY
DESPISED
STEBROTHER
SEES YOU
SHORN OF
YOUR GOLDEN
LOCKS...



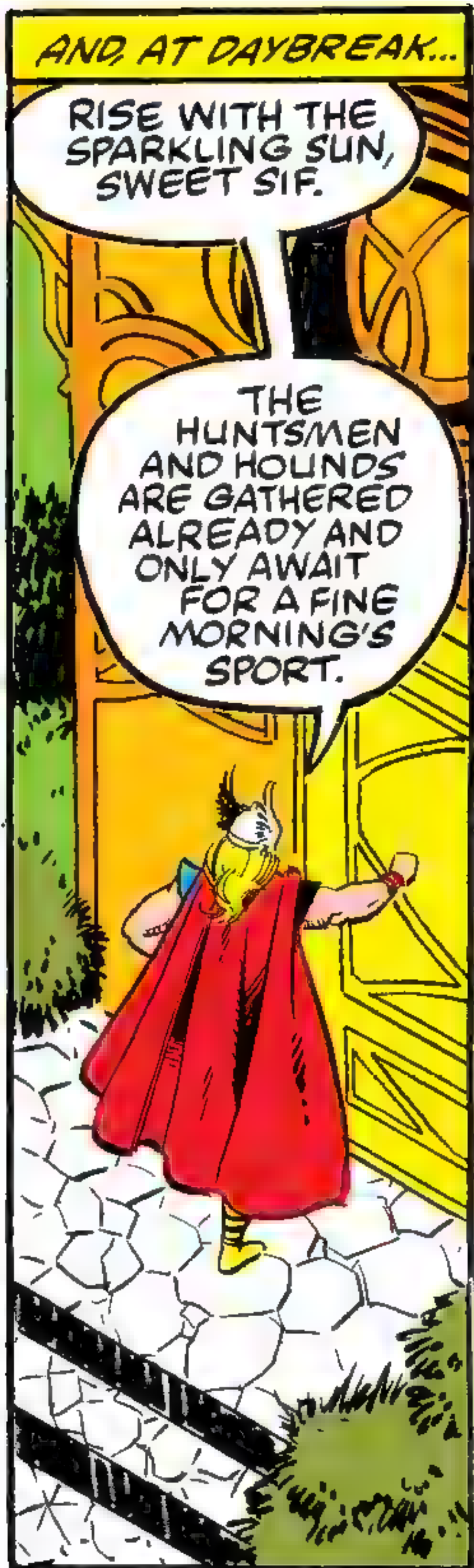
... AND BALD AS
A CABBAGE--



--YOUR CHILDISH ROMANCE
WILL END!



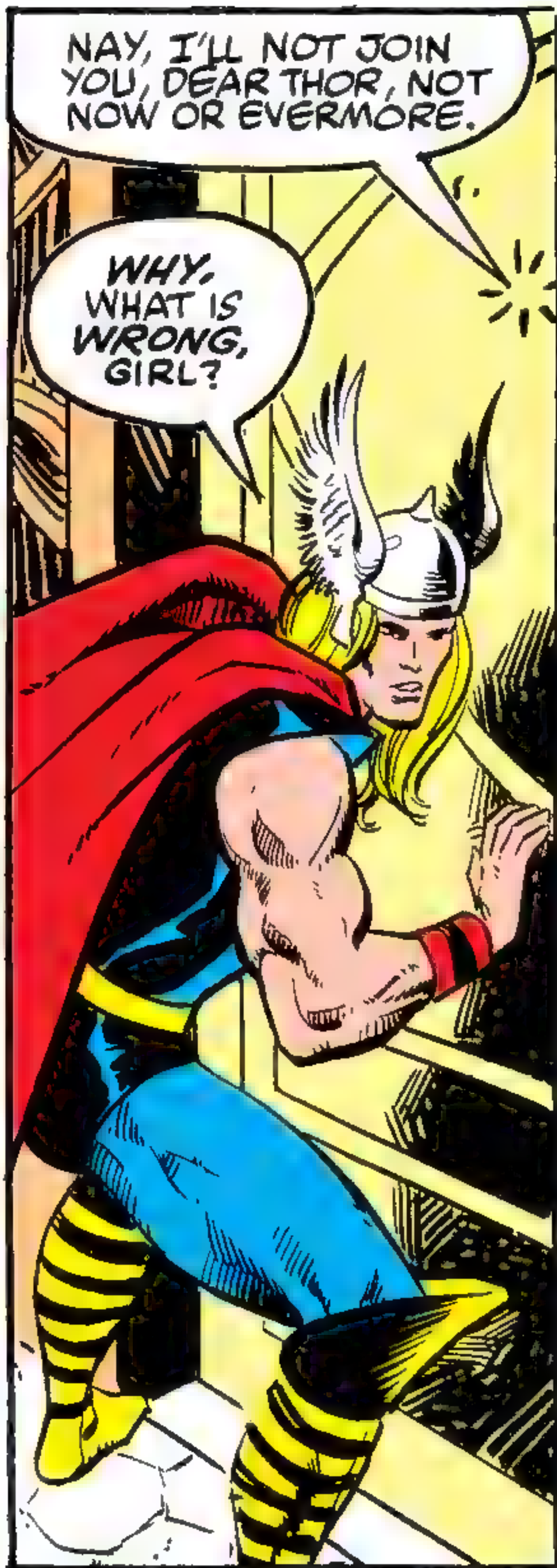
AND ALL BECAUSE
OF LOKI'S CUNNING!



AND AT DAYBREAK...

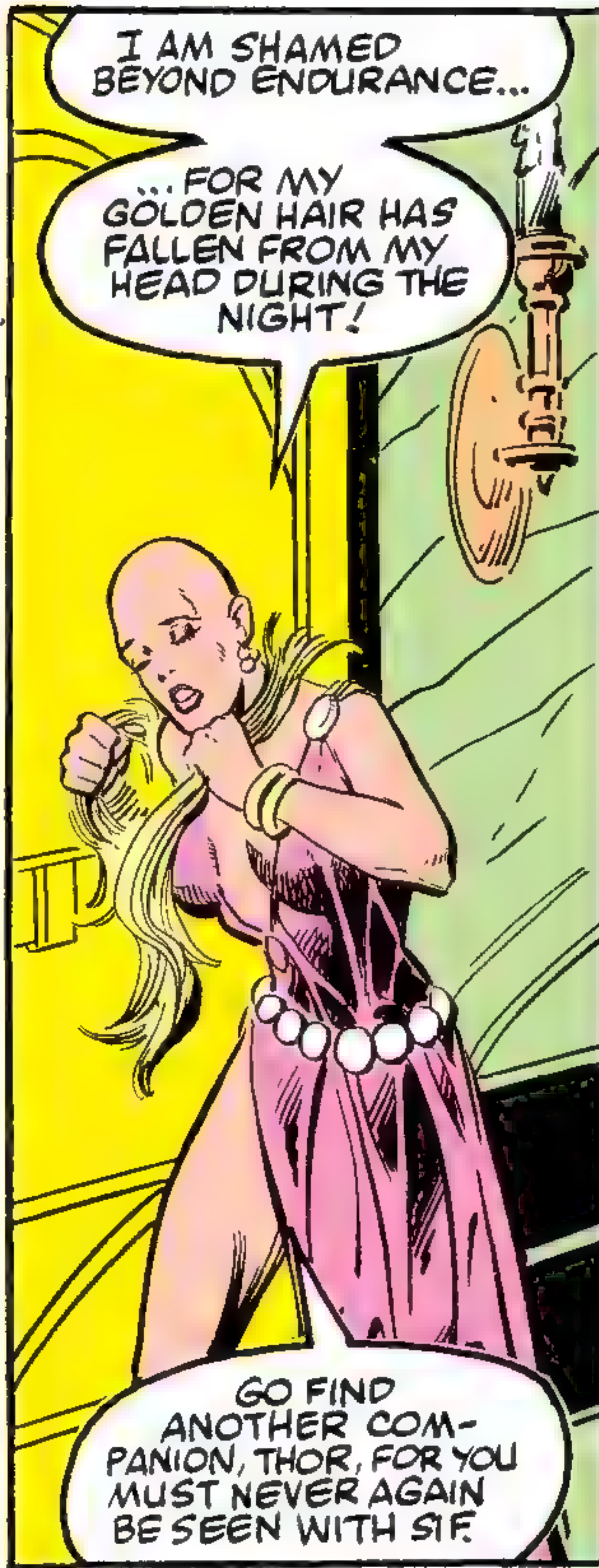
RISE WITH THE SPARKLING SUN, SWEET SIF.

THE HUNSMEN AND HOUNDS ARE GATHERED ALREADY AND ONLY AWAIT FOR A FINE MORNING'S SPORT.



NAY, I'LL NOT JOIN YOU, DEAR THOR, NOT NOW OR EVERMORE.

WHY, WHAT IS WRONG, GIRL?



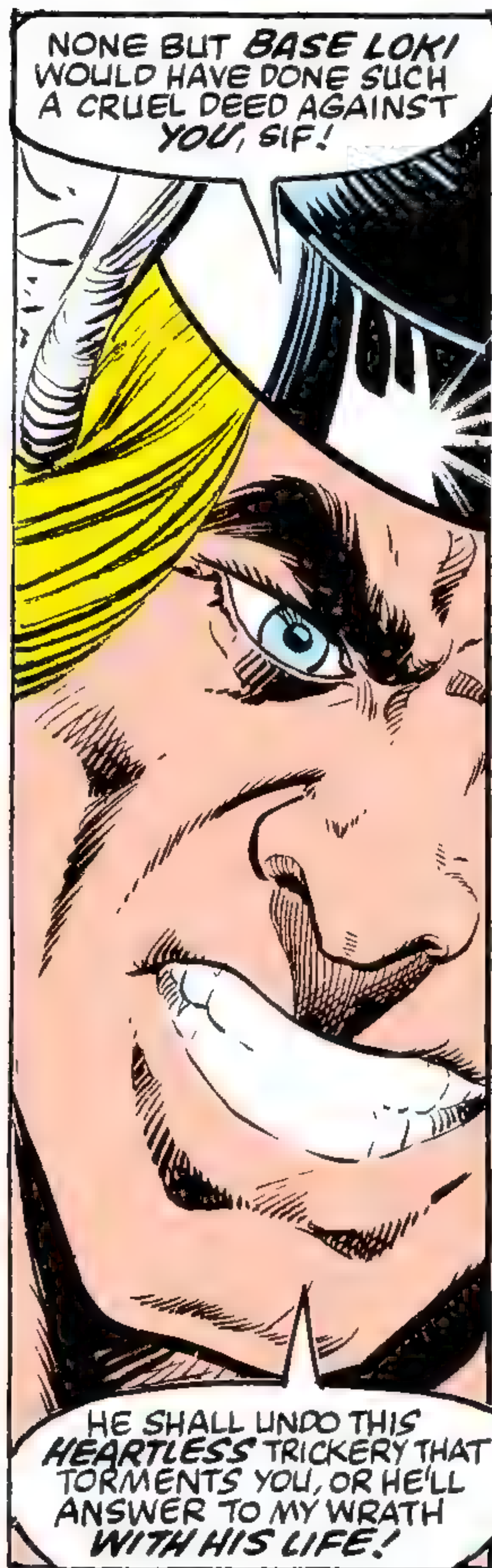
I AM SHAMED BEYOND ENDURANCE...

...FOR MY GOLDEN HAIR HAS FALLEN FROM MY HEAD DURING THE NIGHT!

GO FIND ANOTHER COMPANION, THOR, FOR YOU MUST NEVER AGAIN BE SEEN WITH SIF.

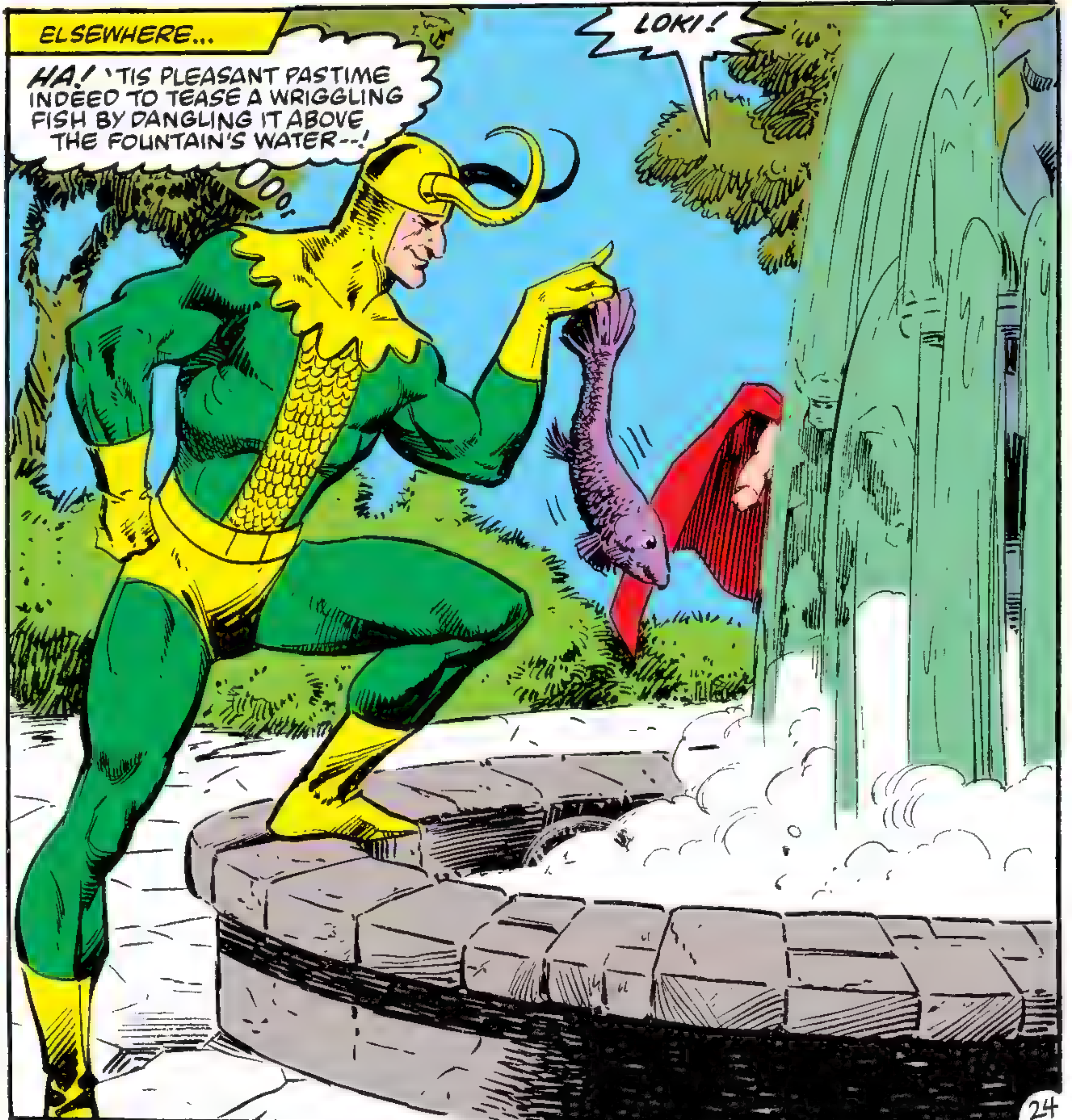


SIF, WHO IS UGLIER BY FAR THAN THE MIS-SHAPEN TROLLS THAT HIDE BENEATH JOTUNHEIM!



NONE BUT **BASE LOKI** WOULD HAVE DONE SUCH A CRUEL DEED AGAINST YOU, SIF!

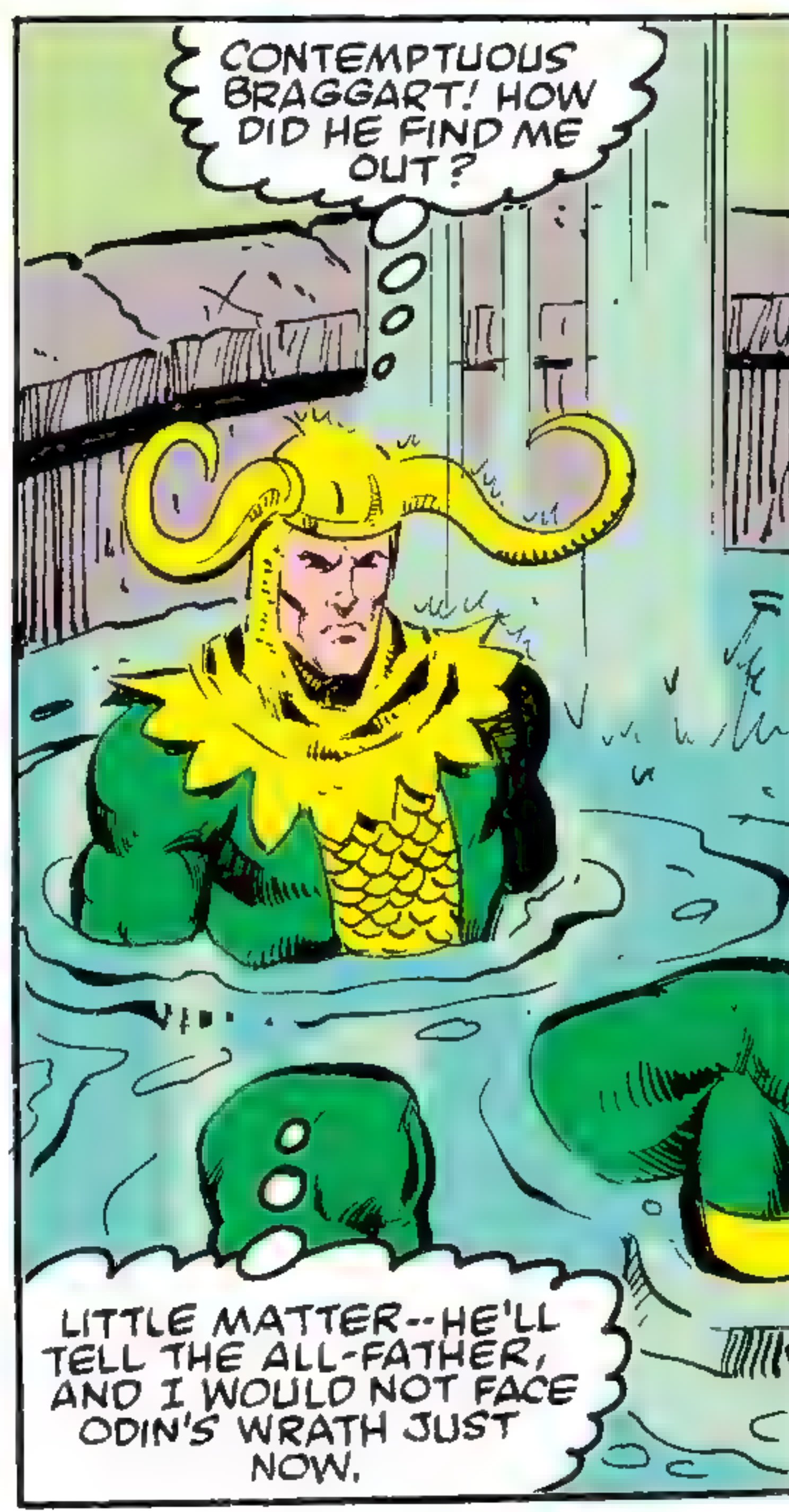
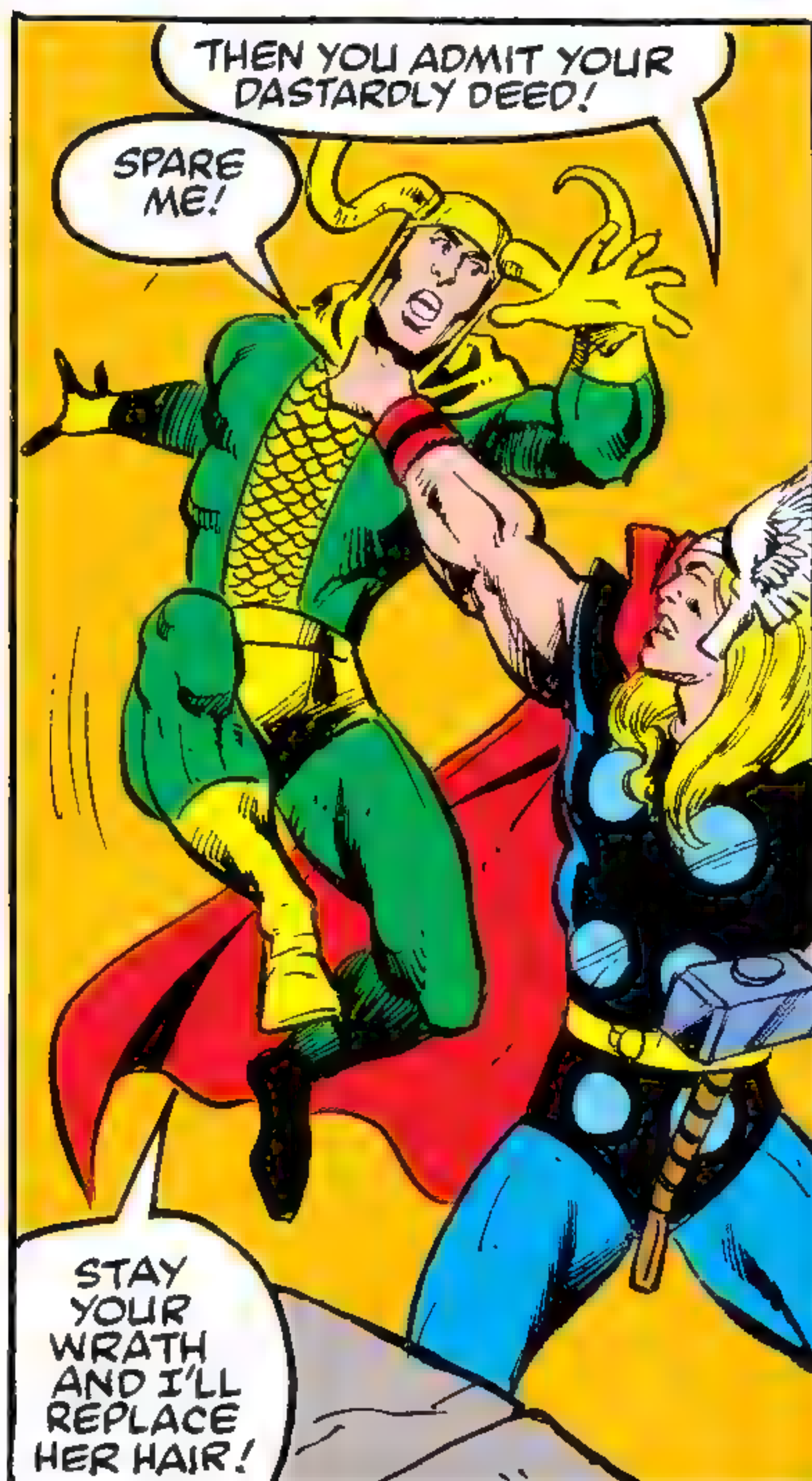
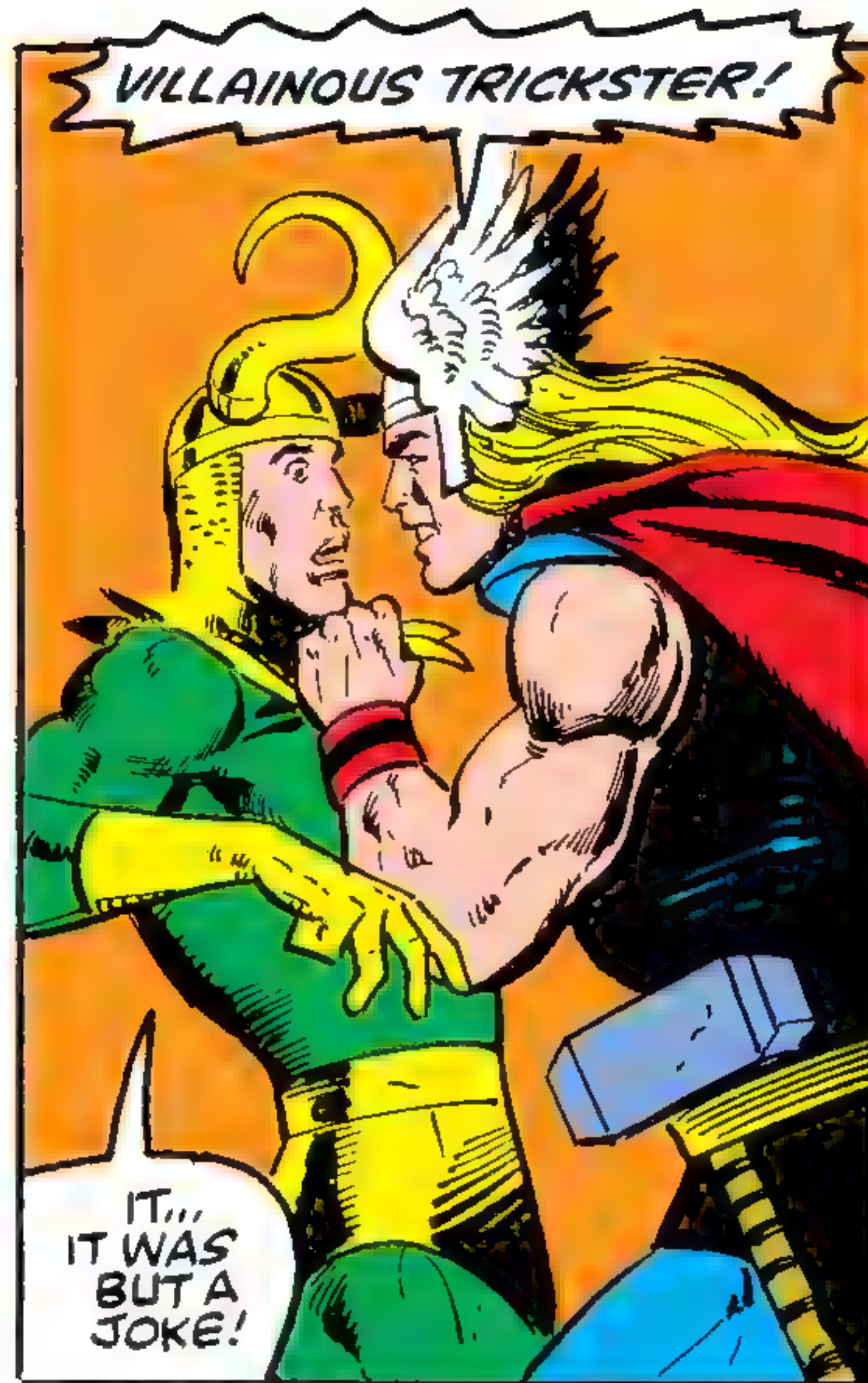
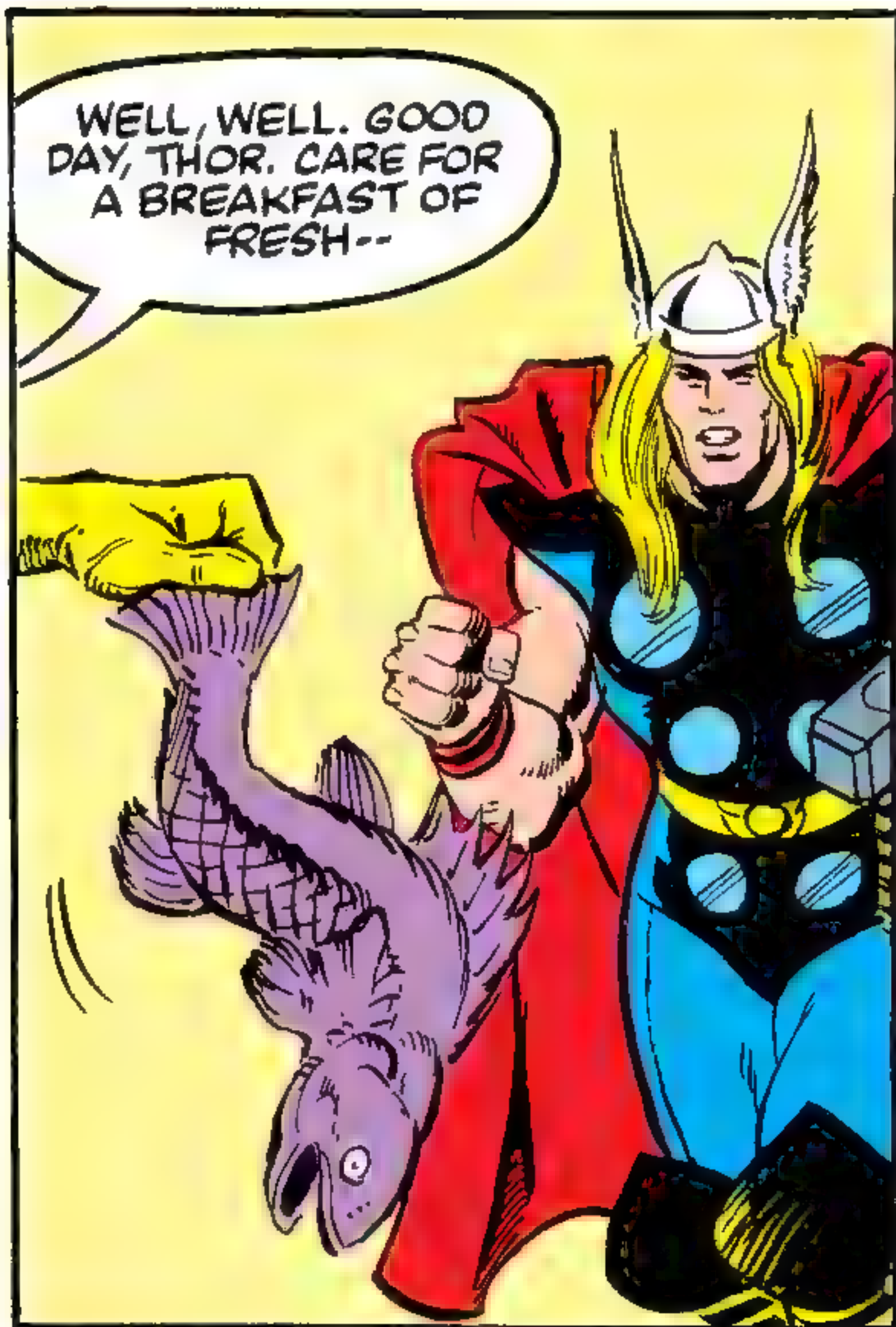
HE SHALL UNDO THIS **HEARTLESS** TRICKERY THAT TORTURES YOU, OR HE'LL ANSWER TO MY WRATH WITH HIS LIFE!

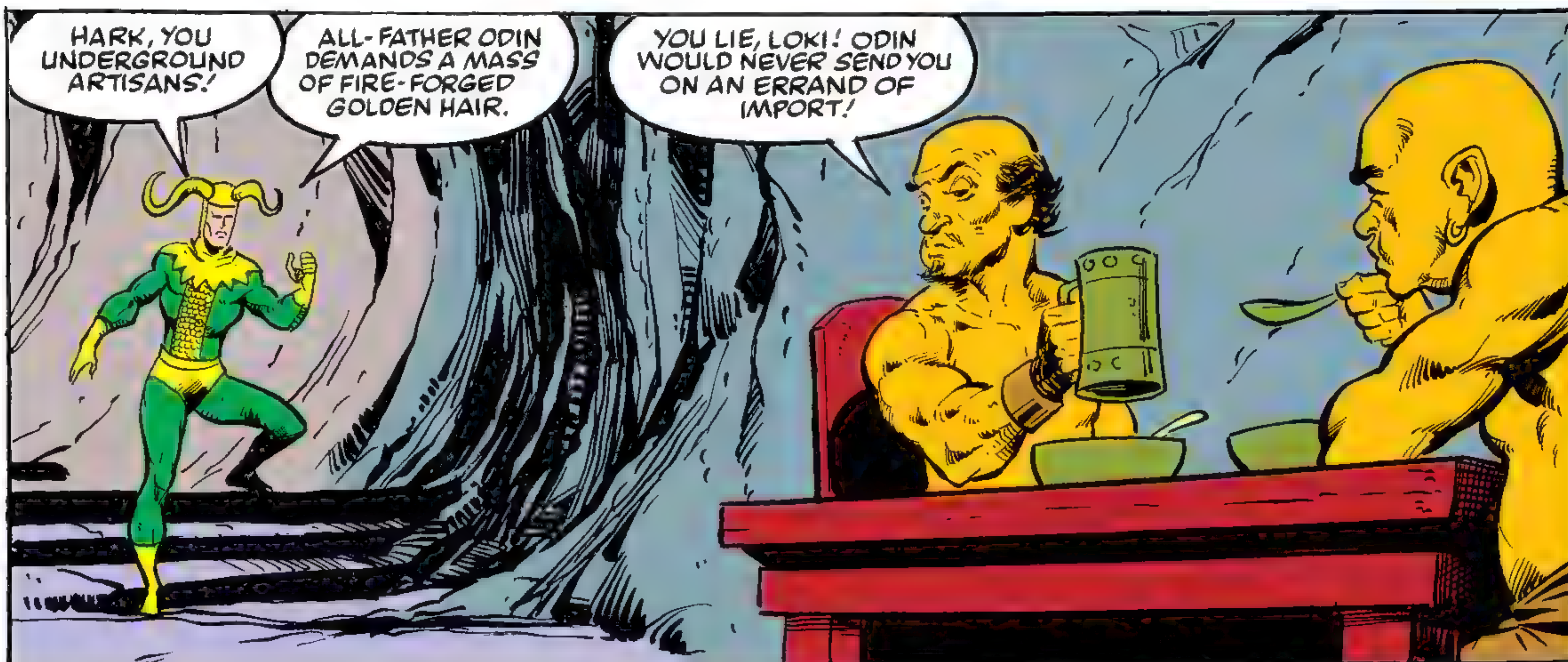


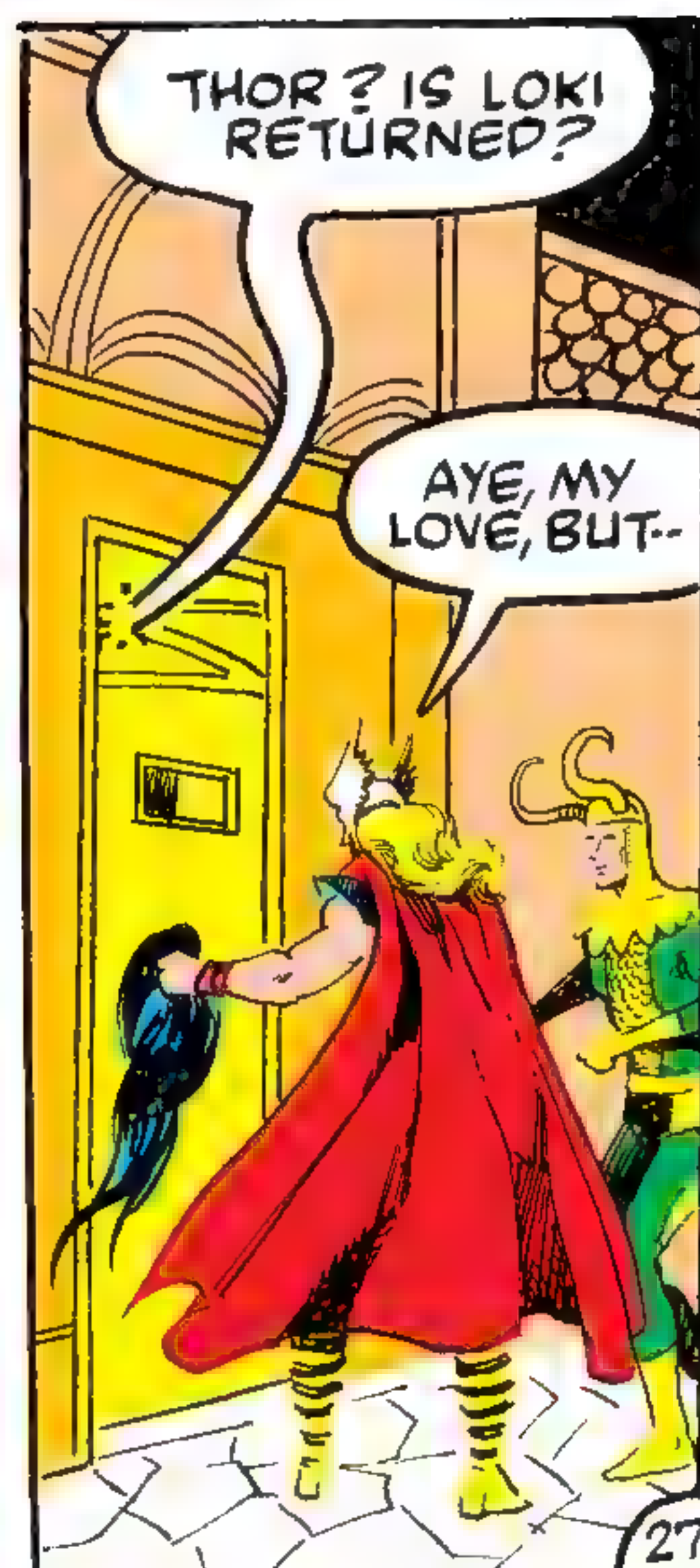
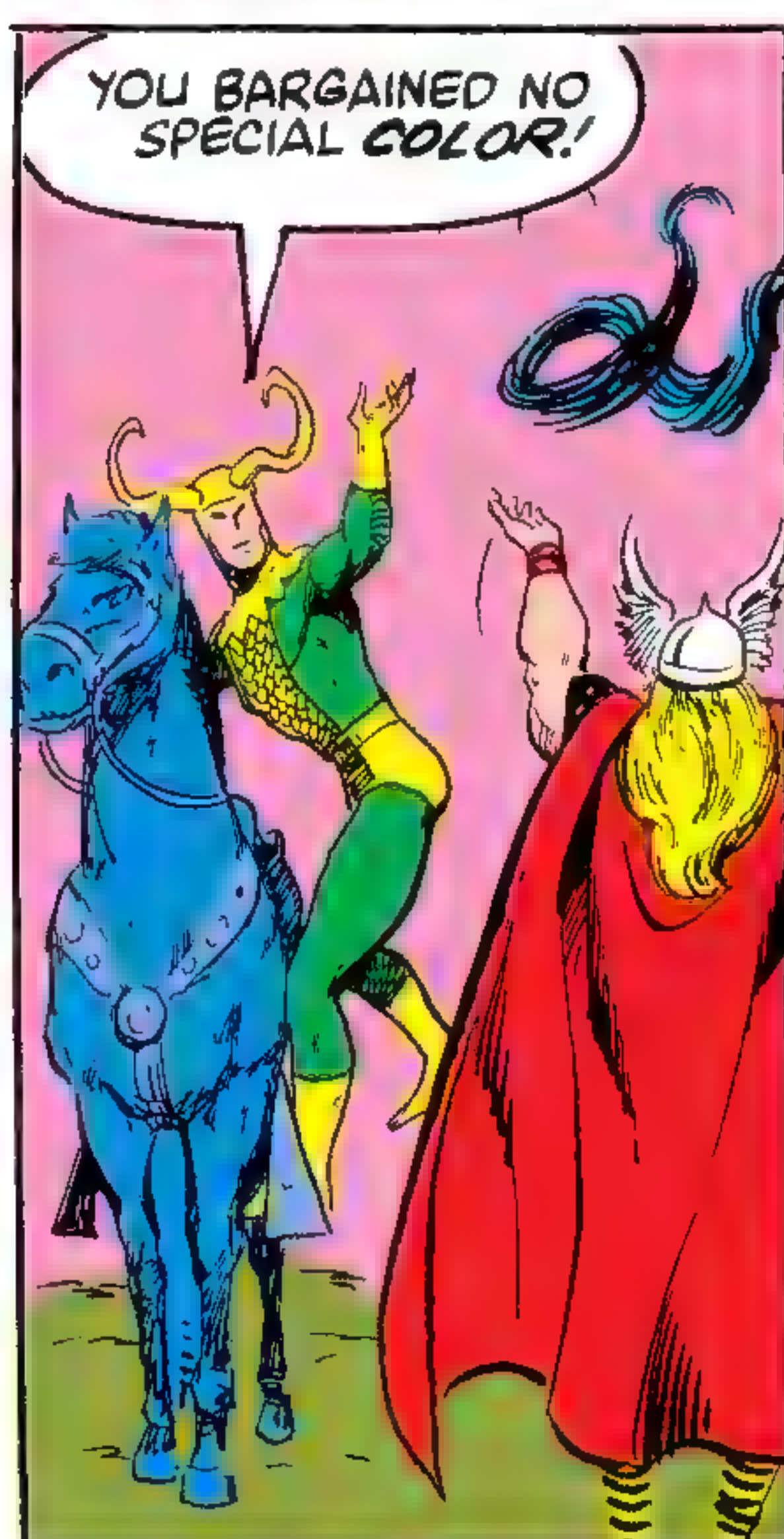
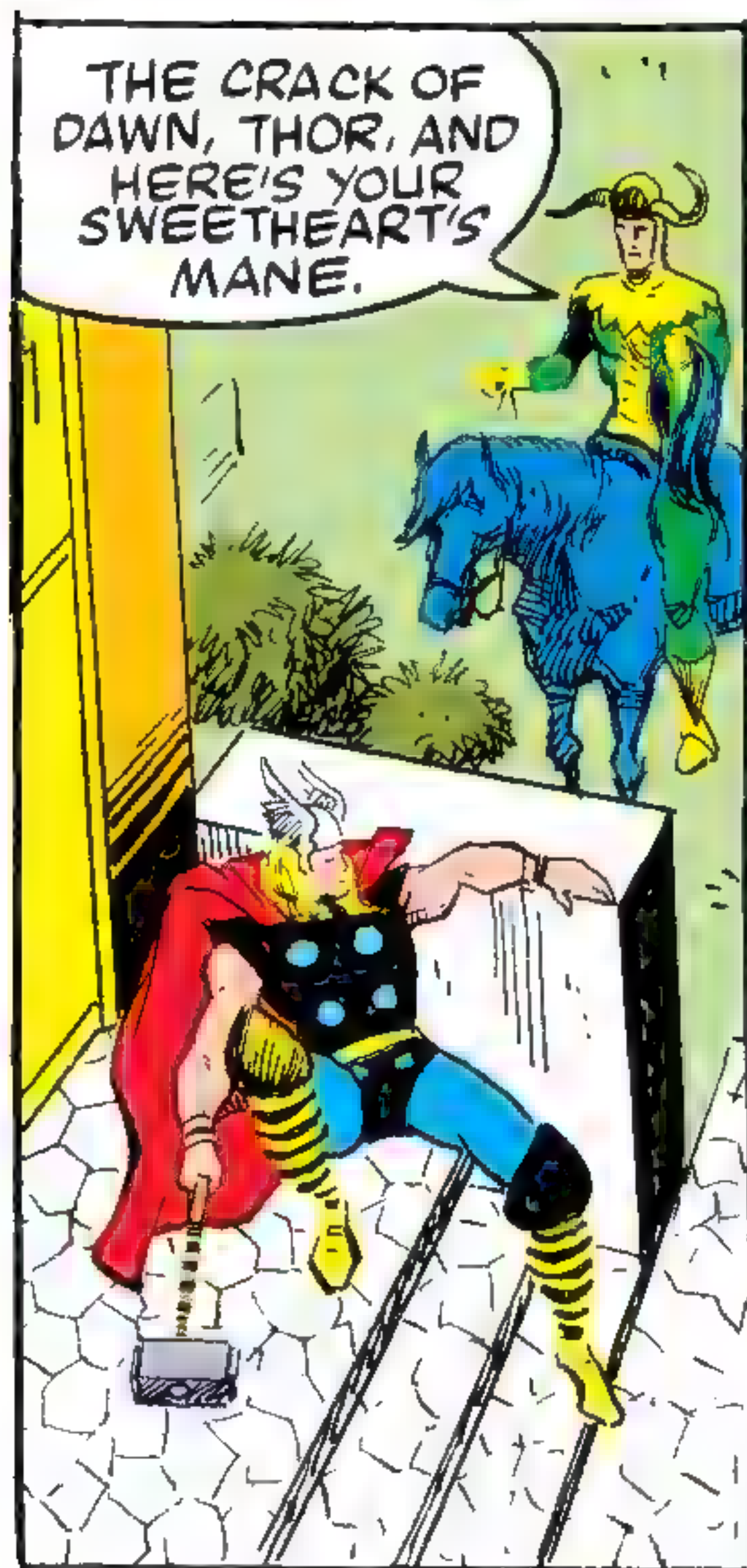
ELSEWHERE...

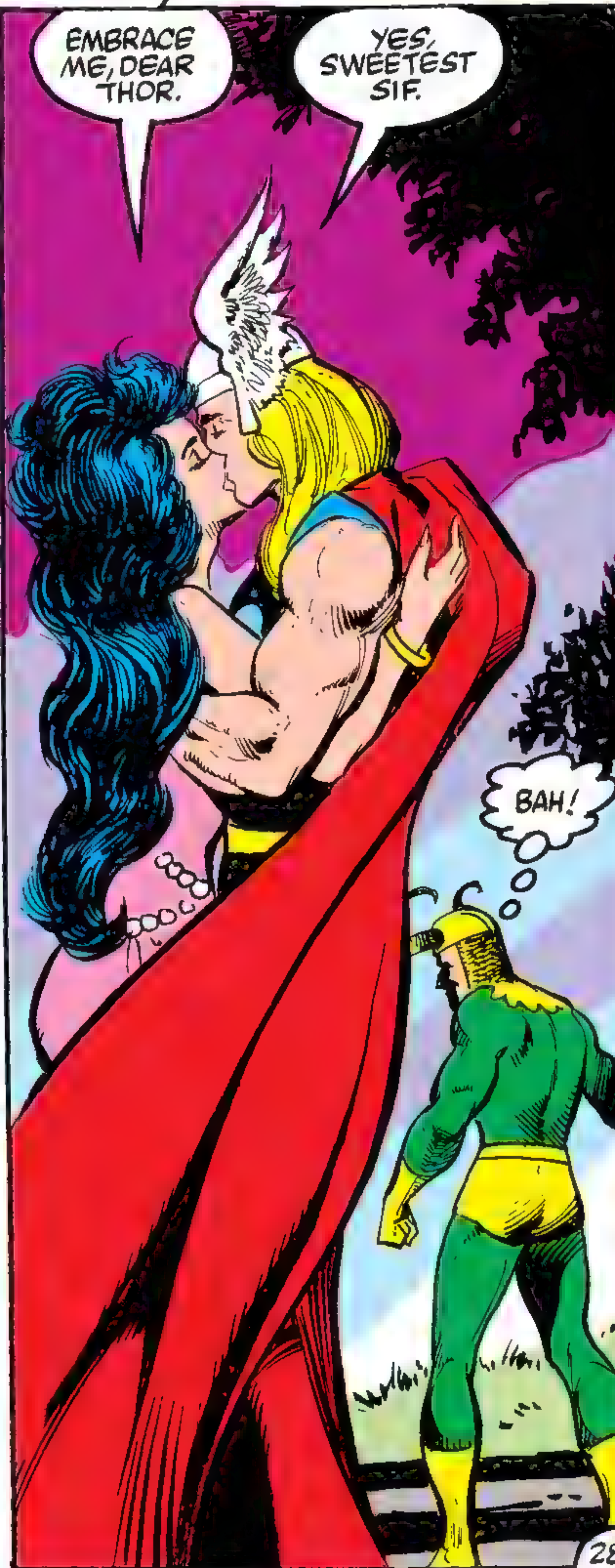
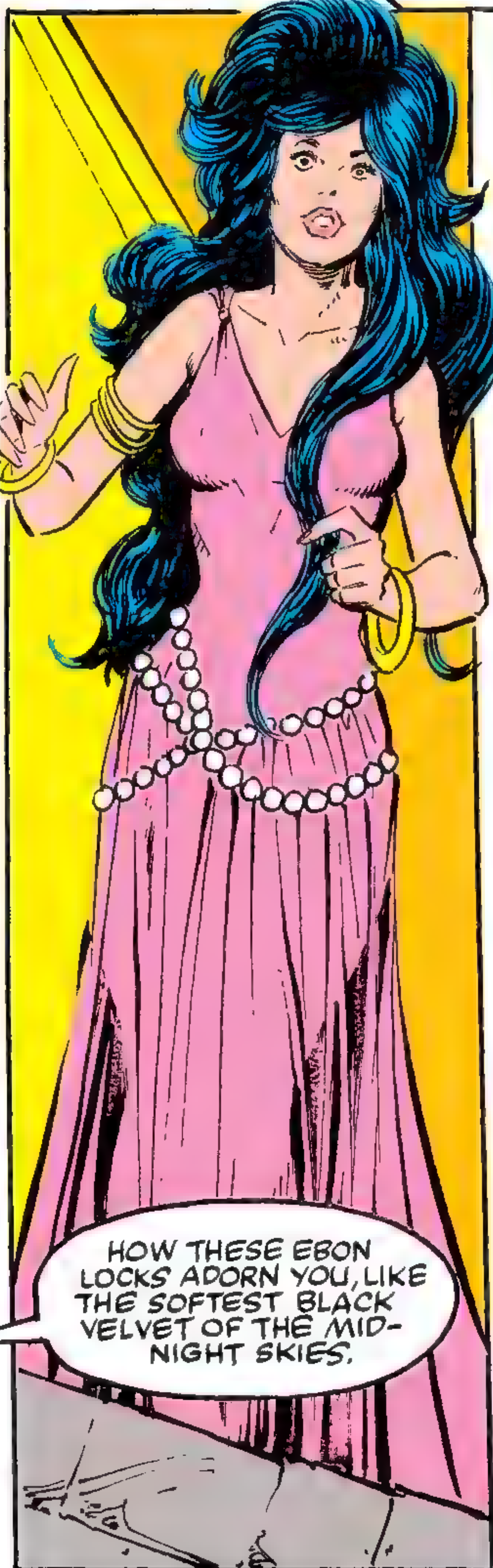
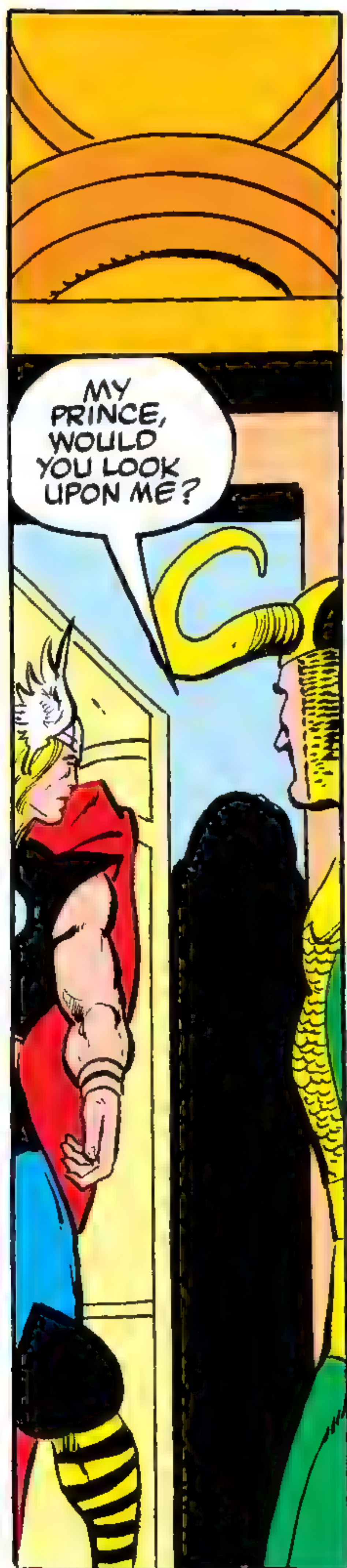
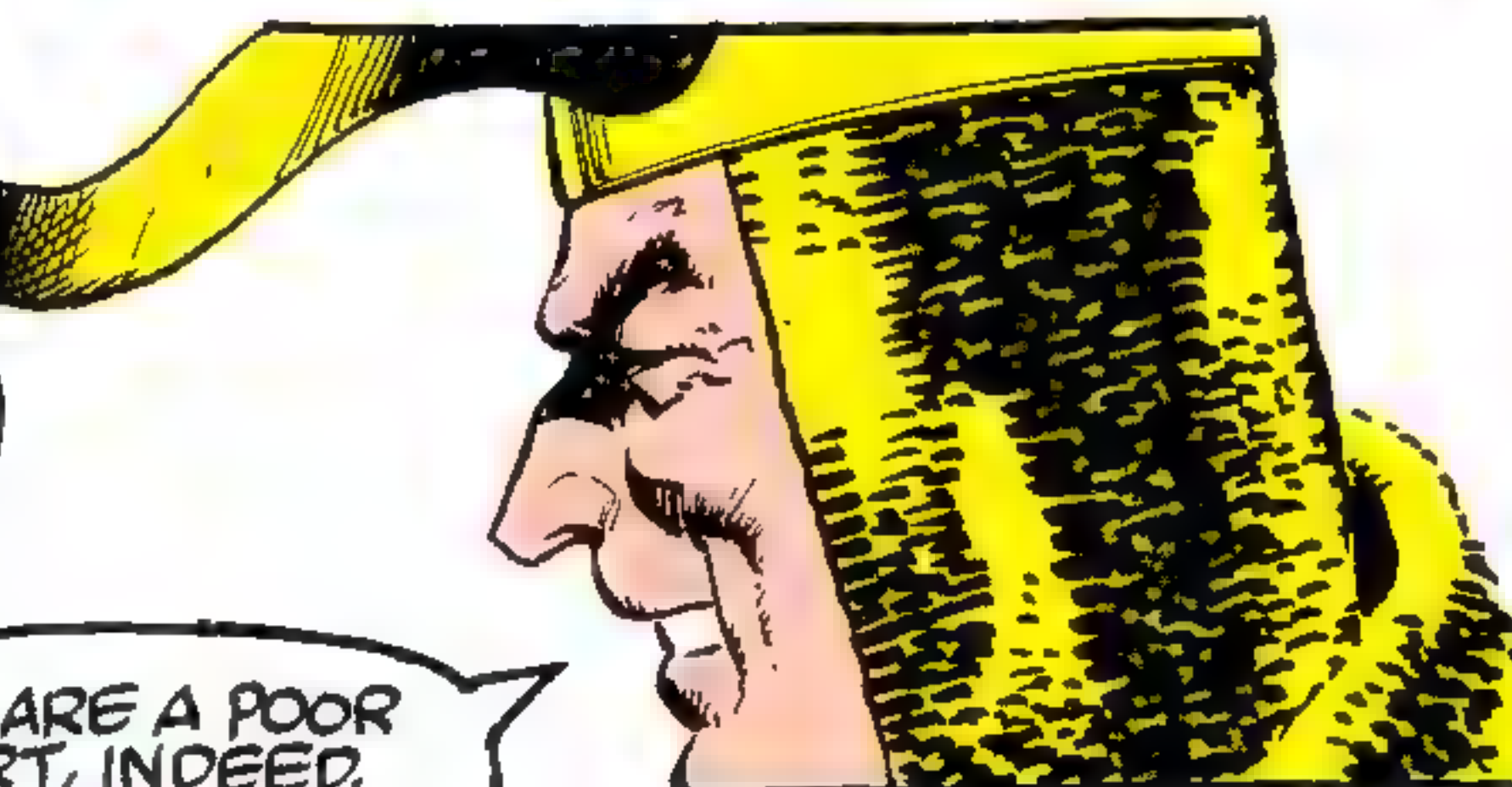
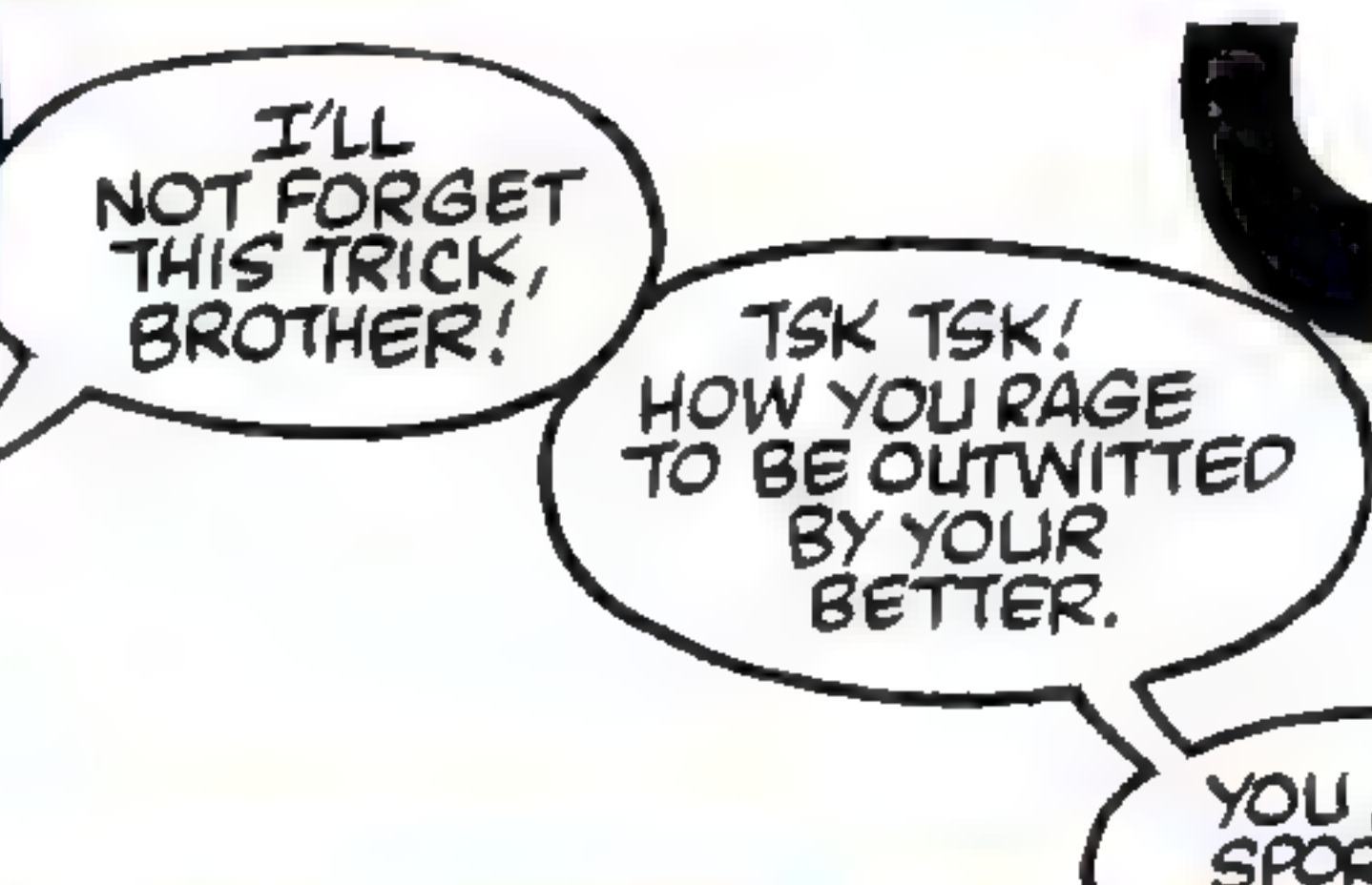
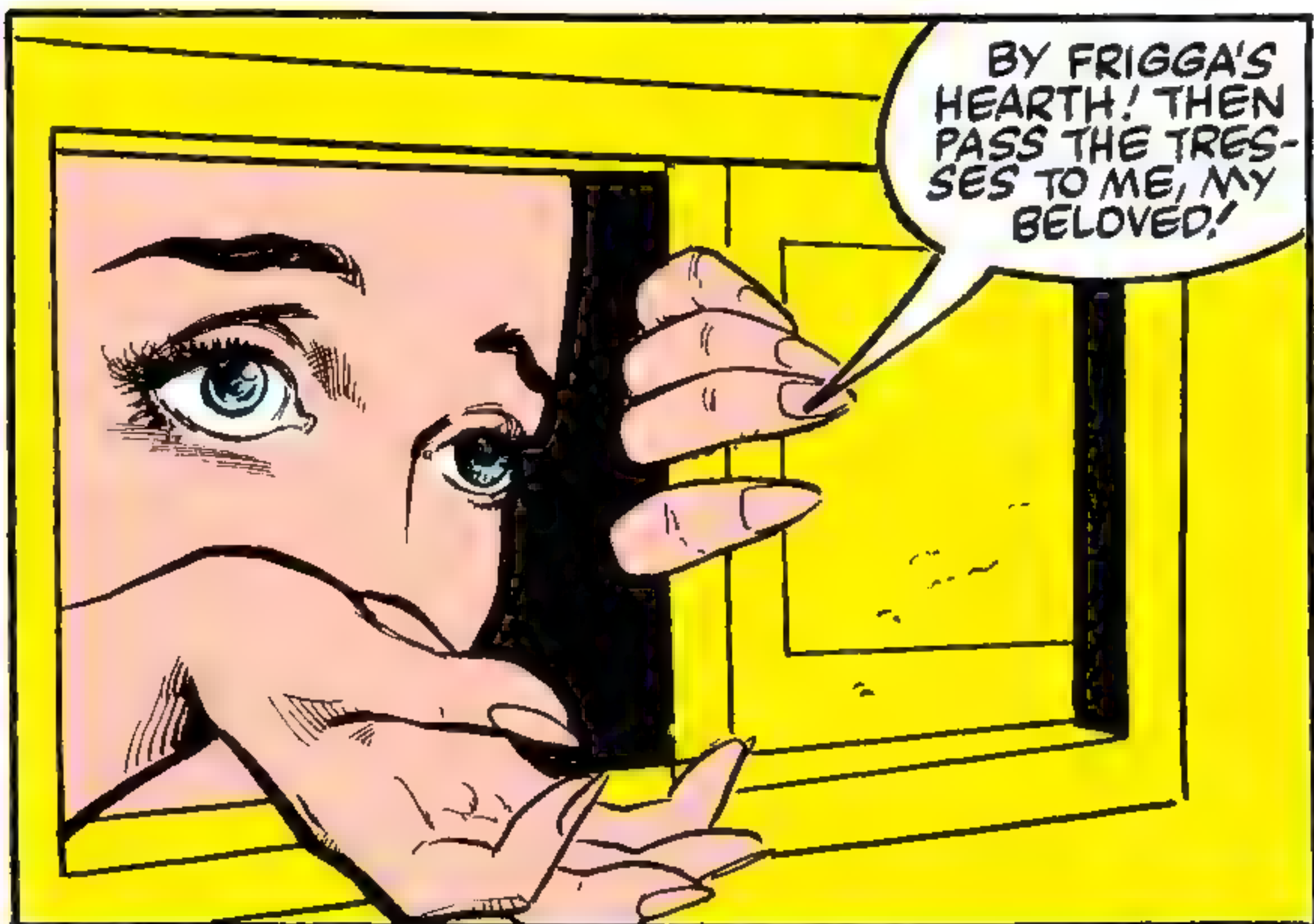
HA! 'TIS PLEASANT PASTIME INDEED TO TEASE A WRIGGLING FISH BY DANGLING IT ABOVE THE FOUNTAIN'S WATER---

LOKI!









CHAPTER
V

THE WORSHIP OF MIDGARD

"BEHOLD, SISTERS... MIDGARD,
THE REALM THAT LIES BELOW THE
RAINBOW BRIDGE. THERE MORTAL
MEN, CALLING THEMSELVES THE
VIKINGS ONCE WORSHIPPED THOR.
GAZE ON AND SEE..."

BLESS US, LORD THOR,
TO WHOM WE SACRIFICE
THIS LAMB AND LIFT OUR
DRINKING HORNS IN
HOMMAGE.

GRANT SUCCESS
TO THIS SUMMER
DAY'S VOYAGE.

ALL HAIL
THEE, SON OF
ODIN, PRINCE
OF GODS!



ALL HAIL
THOR, PRINCE
OF GODS!

ALL HAIL THOR, PRINCE OF GODS!

"THE WORDS OF FERVENT PRAYER
MINGLE WITH THE FRAGRANCE OF
BURNT OFFERING, RISING UNTIL...

LOOK, FATHER. ONCE AGAIN, THE
CELESTIAL HEARTH SMOKES WITH
PUNGENT OFFERINGS TO ME.
THE HOMMAGE WHICH MORTALS
PAY ME MAKES ME SWELL
WITH PRIDE.

THEY HOLD ME
IN THEIR HEARTS
SECOND ONLY TO
YOU, ALL-FATHER.

STILL, NEVER HAVE I MYSELF
DESCENDED TO MIDGARD, AS YOU
SO OFTEN HAVE, THERE TO
CONFER UPON MEN THE BOONS
THEY SEEK.

PRAY
GIVE ME
YOUR LEAVE TO
VISIT MIDGARD
NOW.

I HESITATE, FOR I FEAR THOR'S
PRIDE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HANDLE
SUCH ADULATION. STILL, MY SON IS
NOT ONE TO BE DENIED, AND HE
MAY PROFIT FROM THE EXPERIENCE.

YOU HAVE
MY LEAVE,
THOR.

THEN, BY MJOLNIR'S
ENCHANTED POWER, I
SPAN DIMENSIONS...

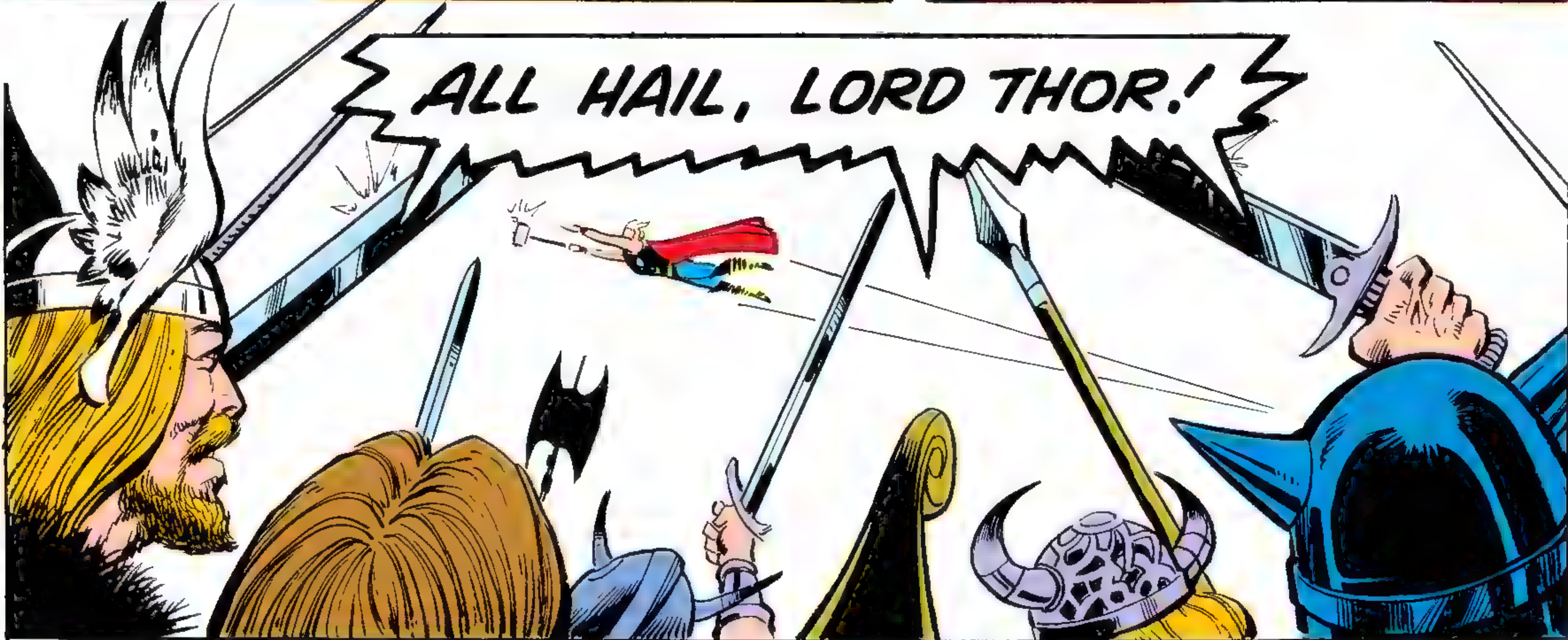
"AND SO, THOR BEGAN TO MAKE FREQUENT VISITS TO MIDGARD, STIRRING HIS FOLLOWERS TO BATTLE AND GLORY..."



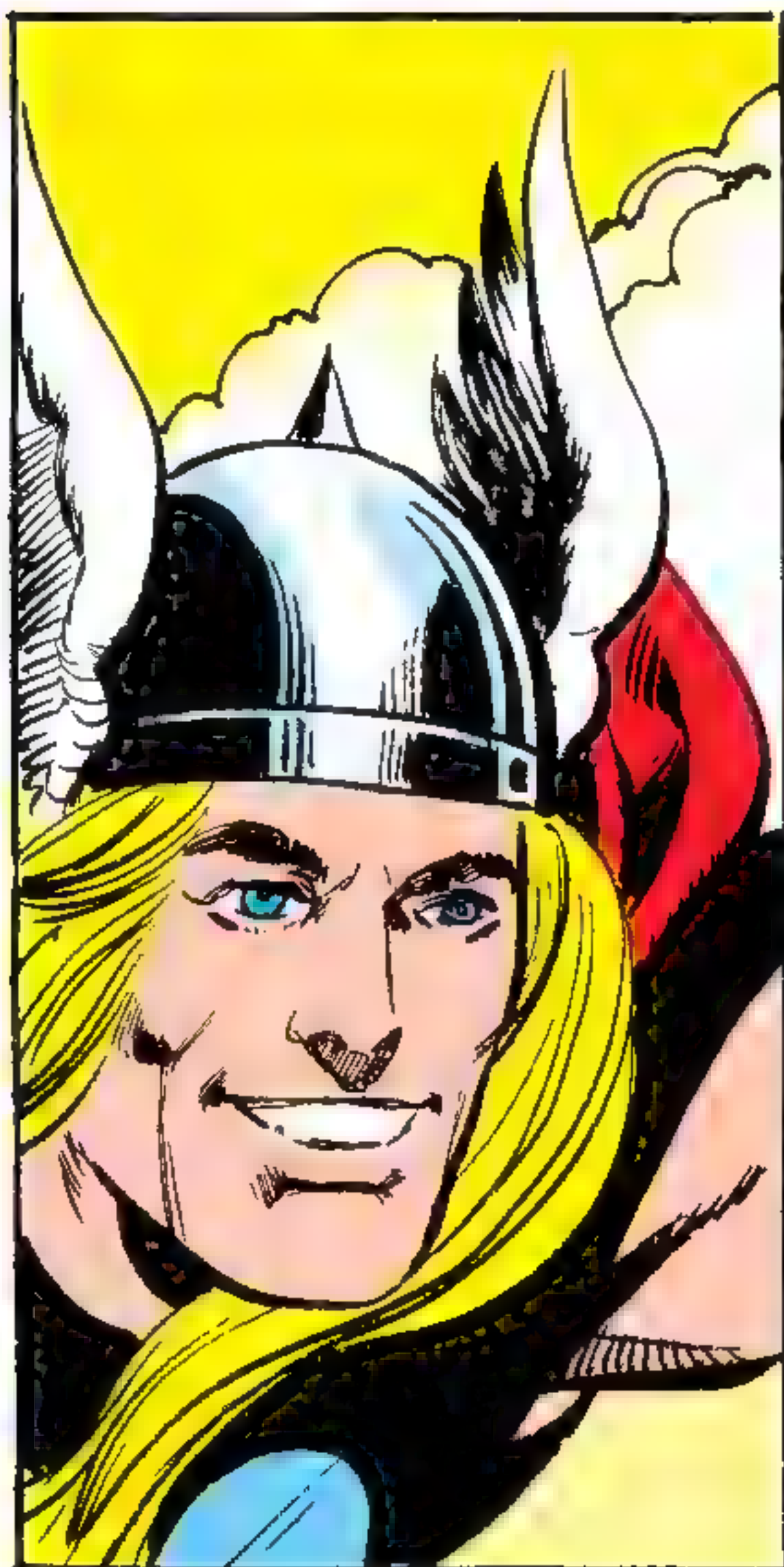
"FOR YEARS THIS WENT ON, TILL ONE DAY WHEN A DRAGON-PROWED LONGSHIP ROLLED TOWARDS A LONE CHRISTIAN MONASTERY ON A CRAGGY COASTLINE."



LOOK! THE THUNDER GOD HIMSELF!

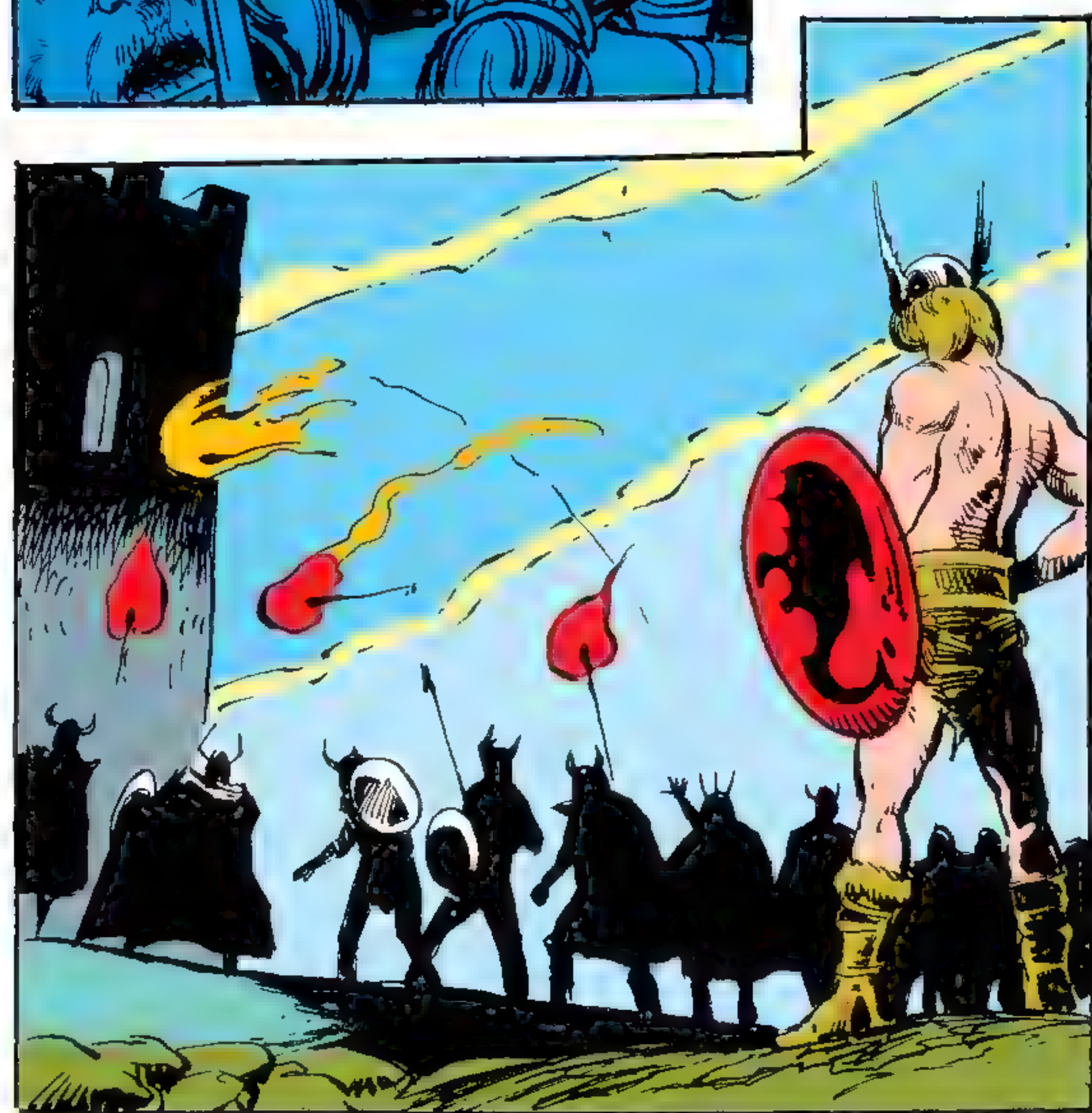
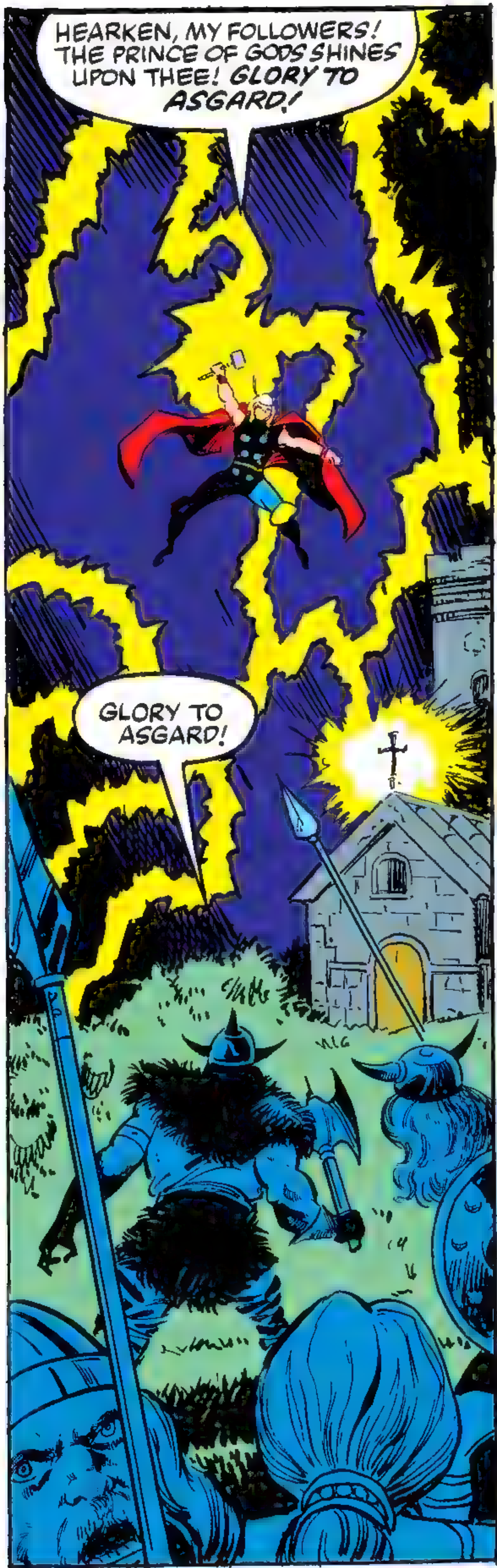


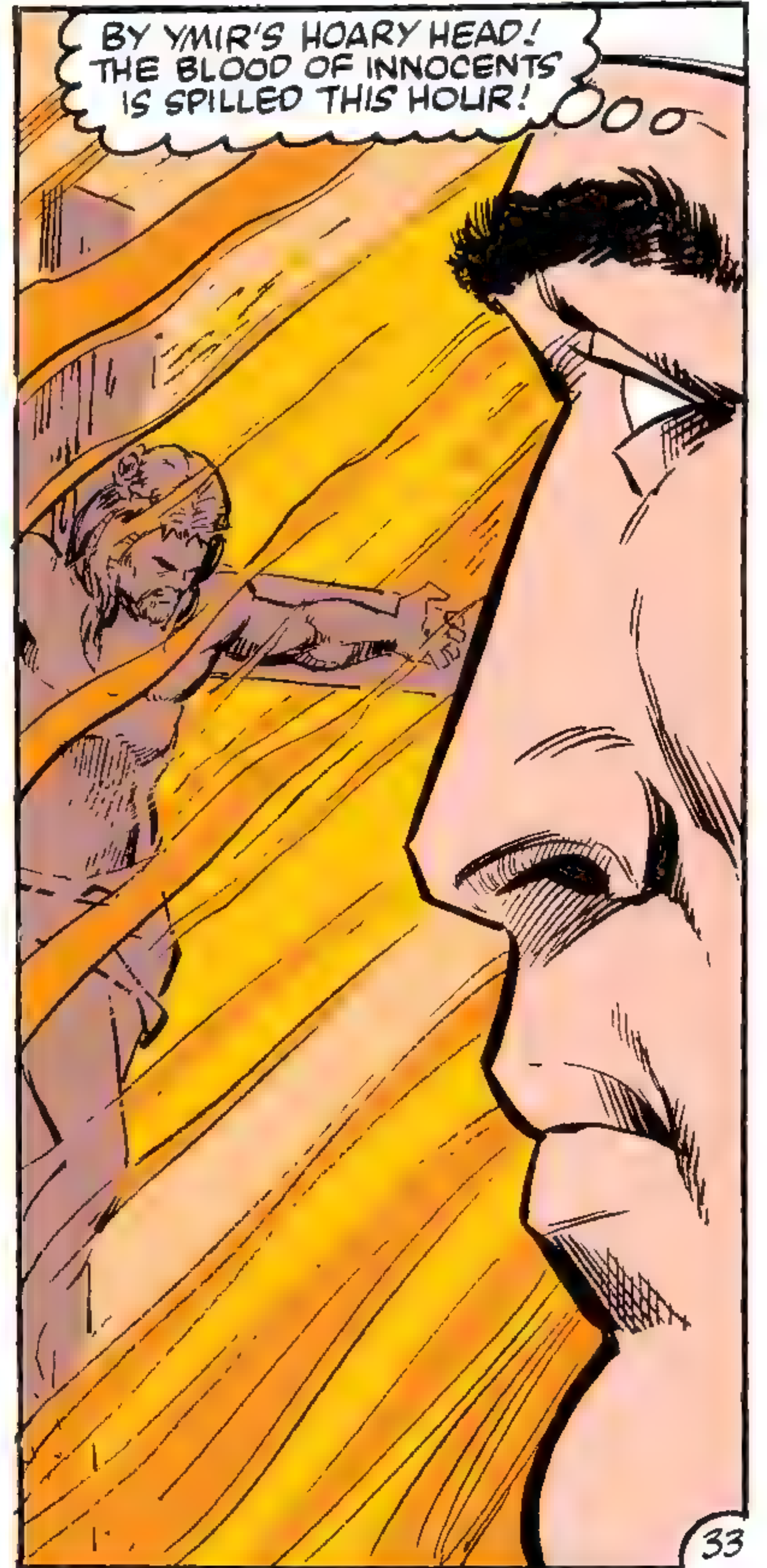
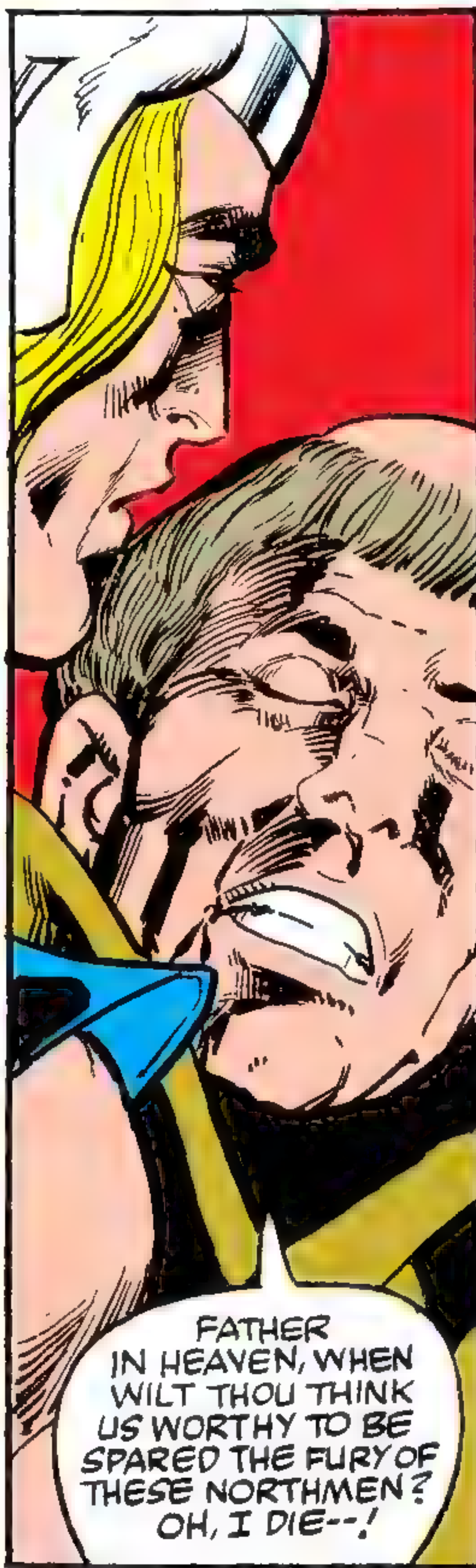
ALL HAIL, LORD THOR!

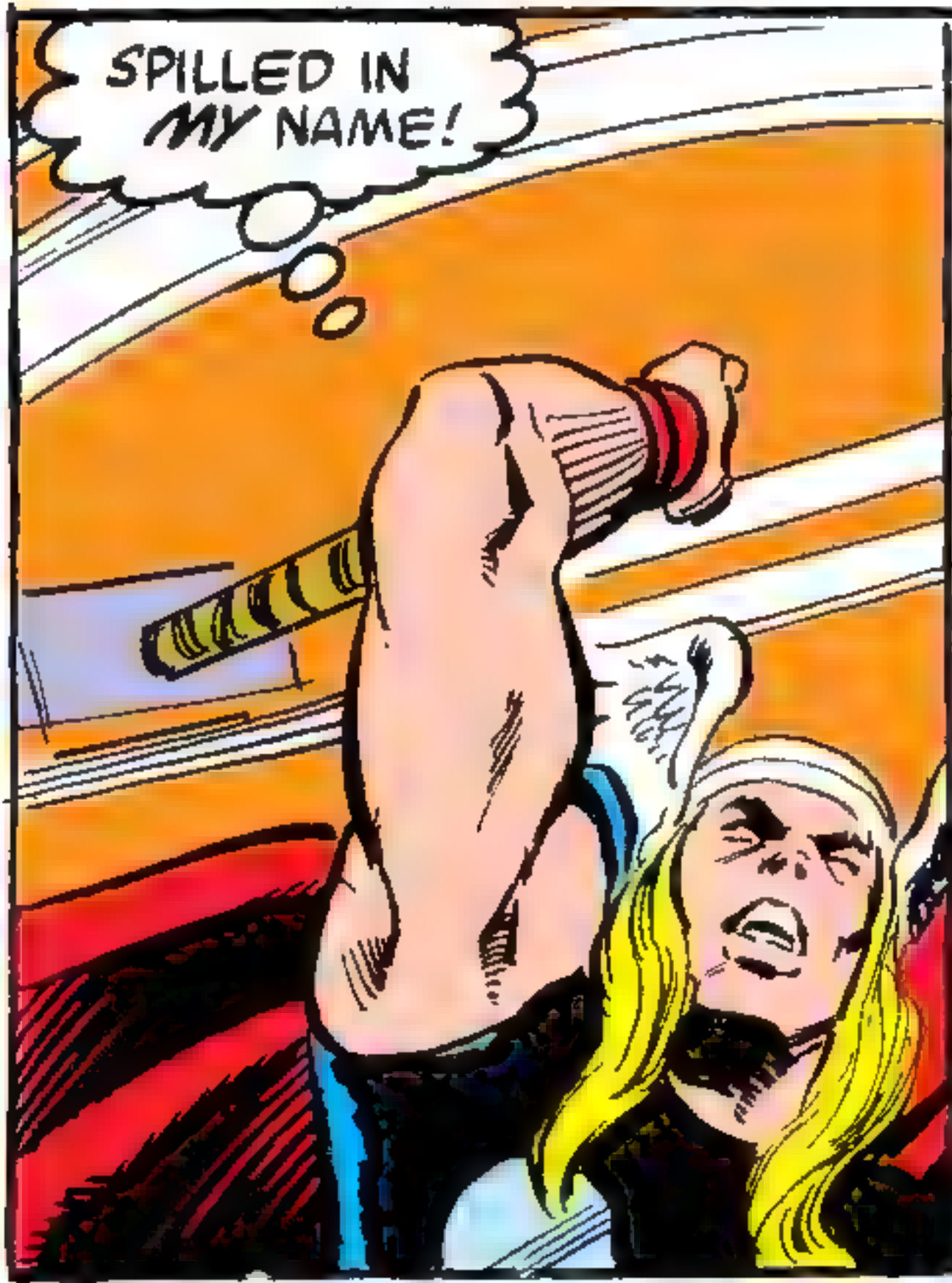


HO! THERE'S INSPIRATION IN THIS DIVINE VISION!

AYE, OUR BLADES WILL BREATHE FIRE THIS DAY! ONWARD!





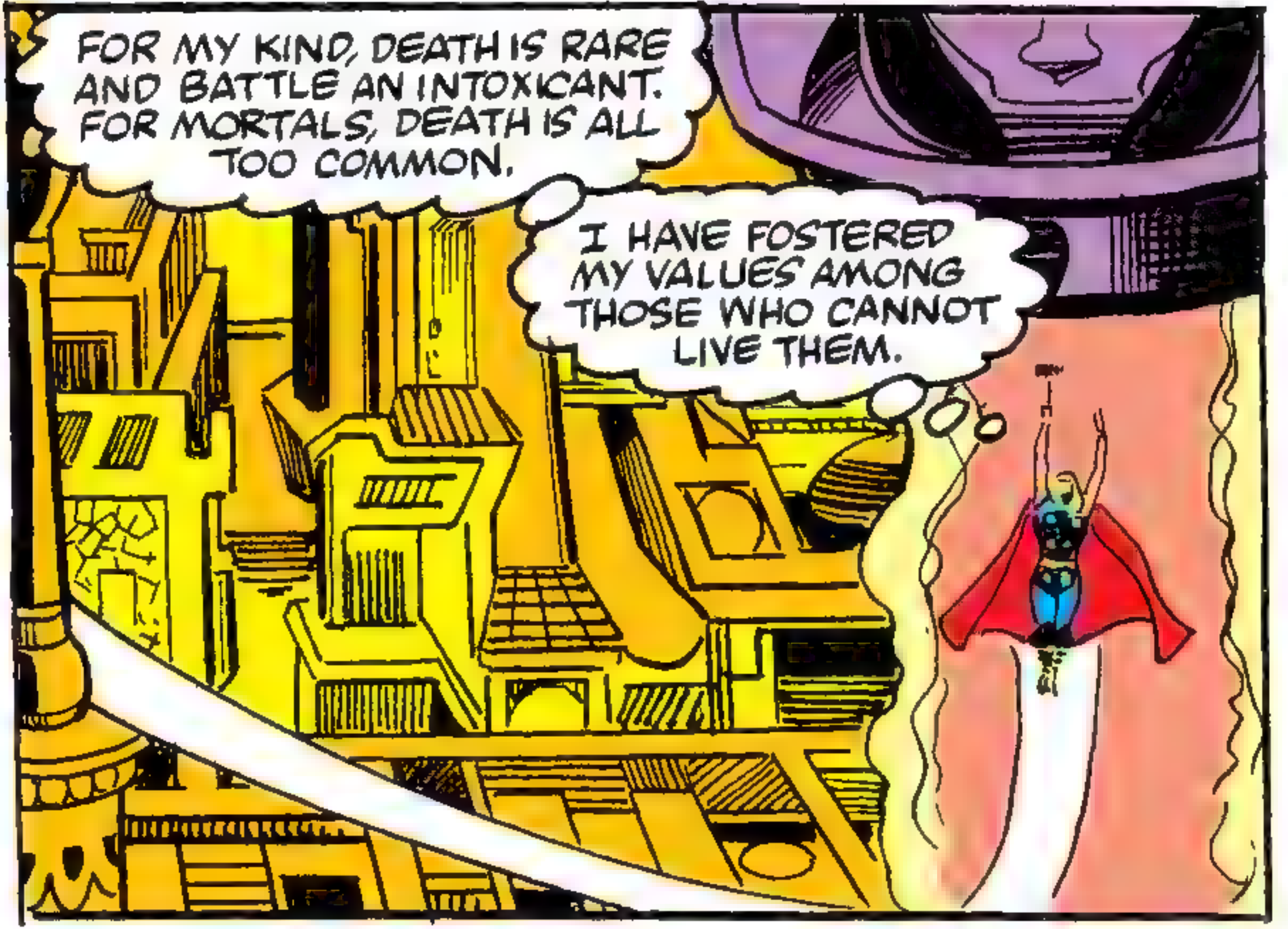


SPILED IN
MY NAME!



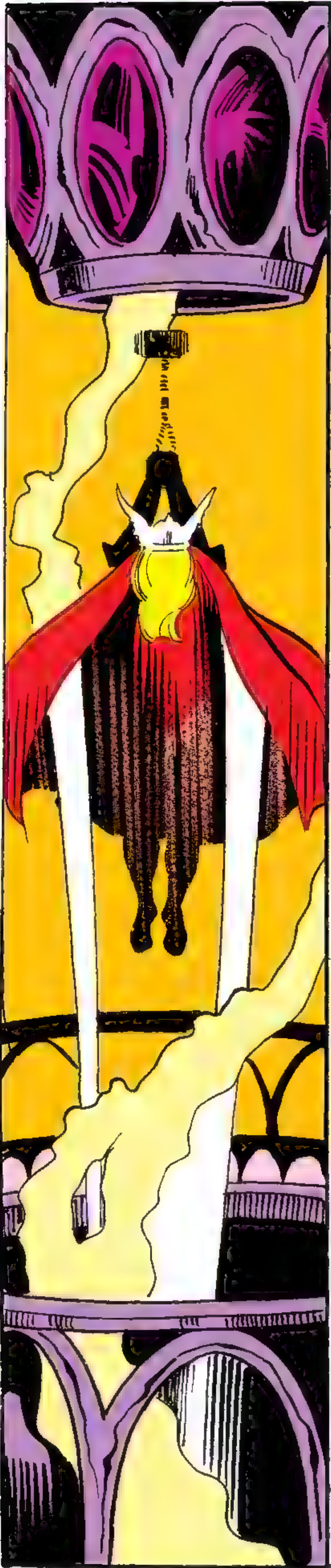
IN MY DESIRE TO BE
GLORIFIED, I ENCOUR-
AGED THE CARNAGE
THAT IS THE VIKINGS'
WAY OF LIFE!

HOW LONG HAS
SLAUGHTER LIKE THIS
TAKEN PLACE WITHOUT
MY KNOWLEDGE!?

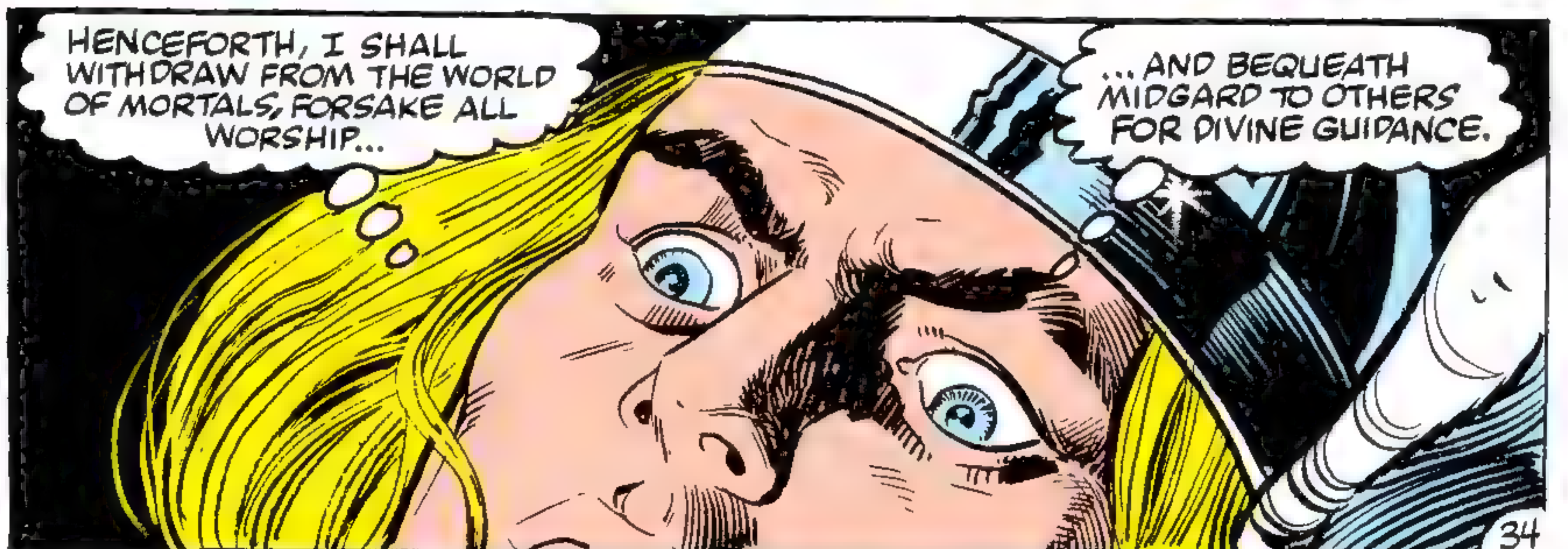


FOR MY KIND, DEATH IS RARE
AND BATTLE AN INTOXICANT.
FOR MORTALS, DEATH IS ALL
TOO COMMON.

I HAVE FOSTERED
MY VALUES AMONG
THOSE WHO CANNOT
LIVE THEM.



I MUST ATONE.



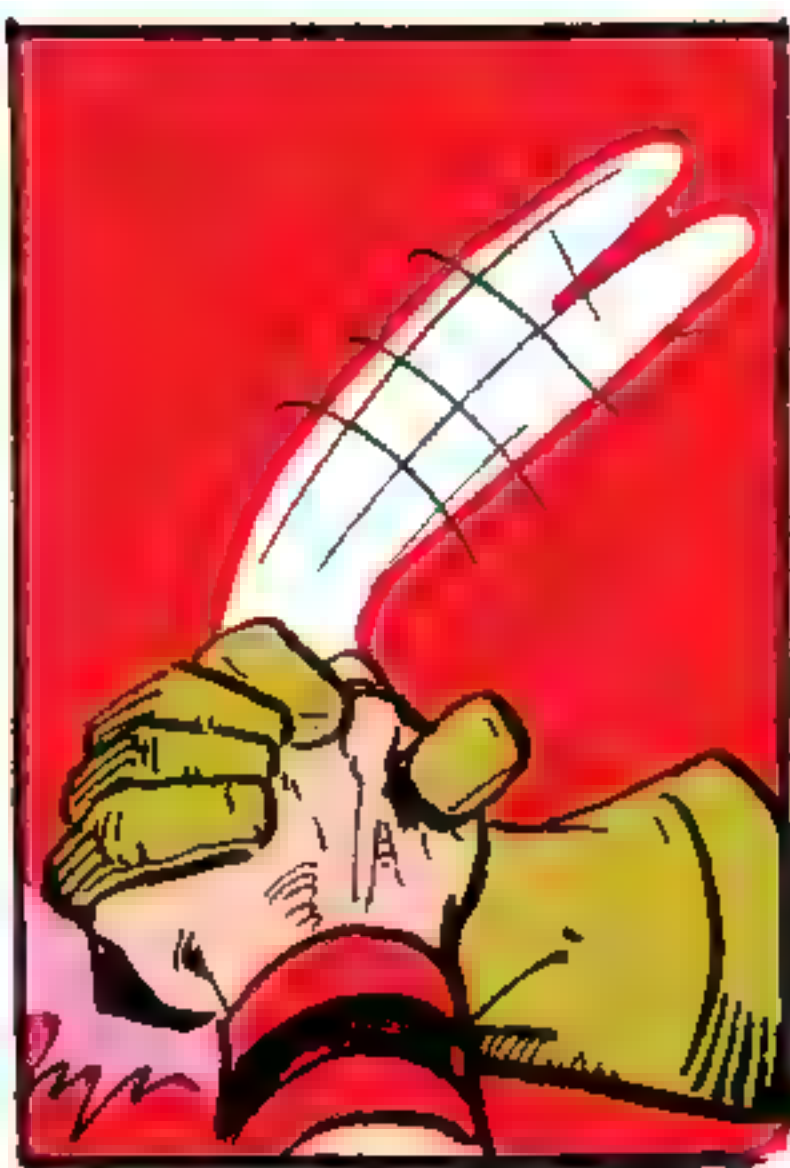
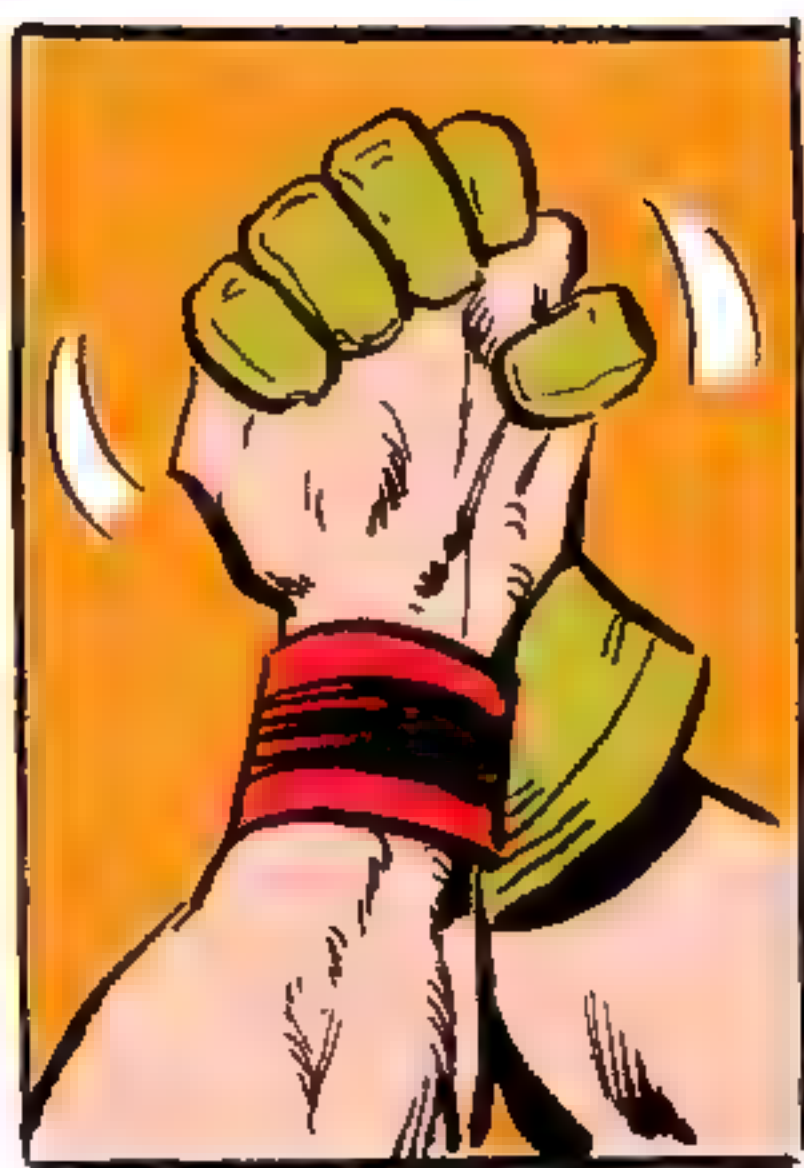
HENCEFORTH, I SHALL
WITHDRAW FROM THE WORLD
OF MORTALS, FORSAKE ALL
WORSHIP...

... AND BEQUEATH
MIDGARD TO OTHERS
FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE.

"IN TIME, HOWEVER, ALL GUILTY MEMORIES OF HIS JOURNEYS TO MIDGARD WERE BURIED DEEP WITHIN THOR'S MIND, SO THAT HIS PROUD SPIRIT SOON DID REASSERT ITSELF IN ASGARD ON HIGH..."

CHAPTER VI

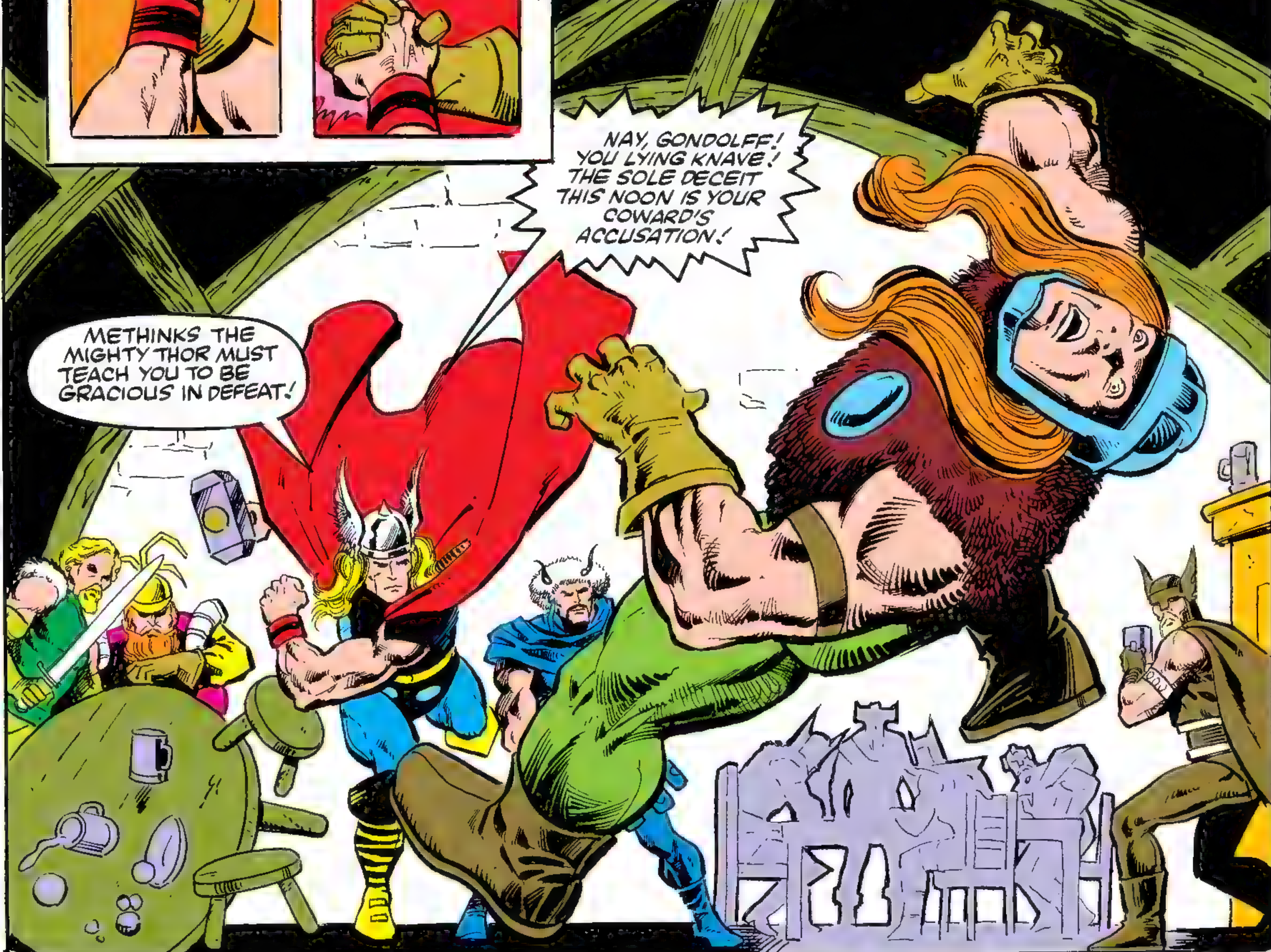
THE HUMBLING OF THOR



WHAT BASE
DECEPTION HAVE
YOU USED TO WIN THIS
ARM WRESTLE, GOD
OF THUNDER?!

NAY, GONDOLFF!
YOU LYING KNAVE!
THE SOLE DECEIT
THIS NOON IS YOUR
COWARD'S
ACCUSATION!

METHINKS THE
MIGHTY THOR MUST
TEACH YOU TO BE
GRACIOUS IN DEFEAT!



HO! WHO STANDS
WITH THE PRINCE!?

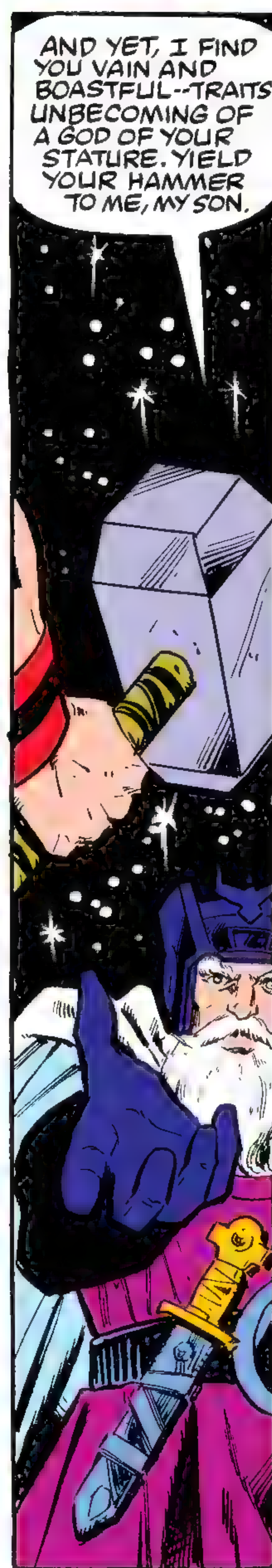
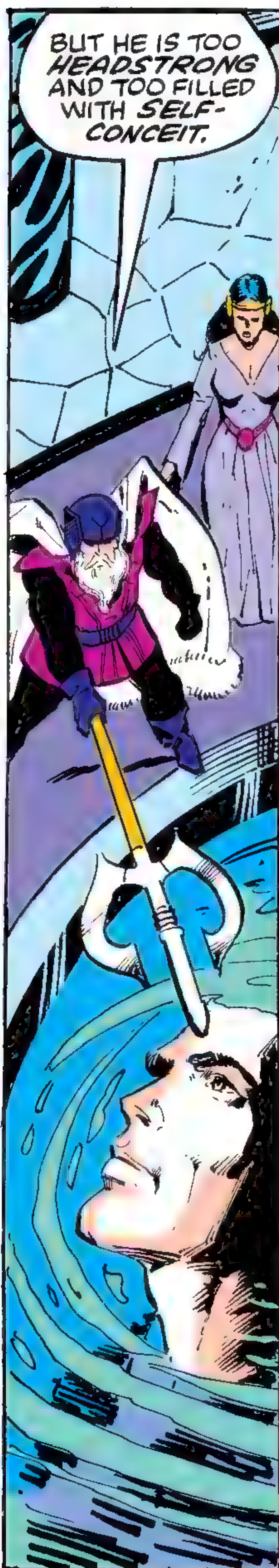
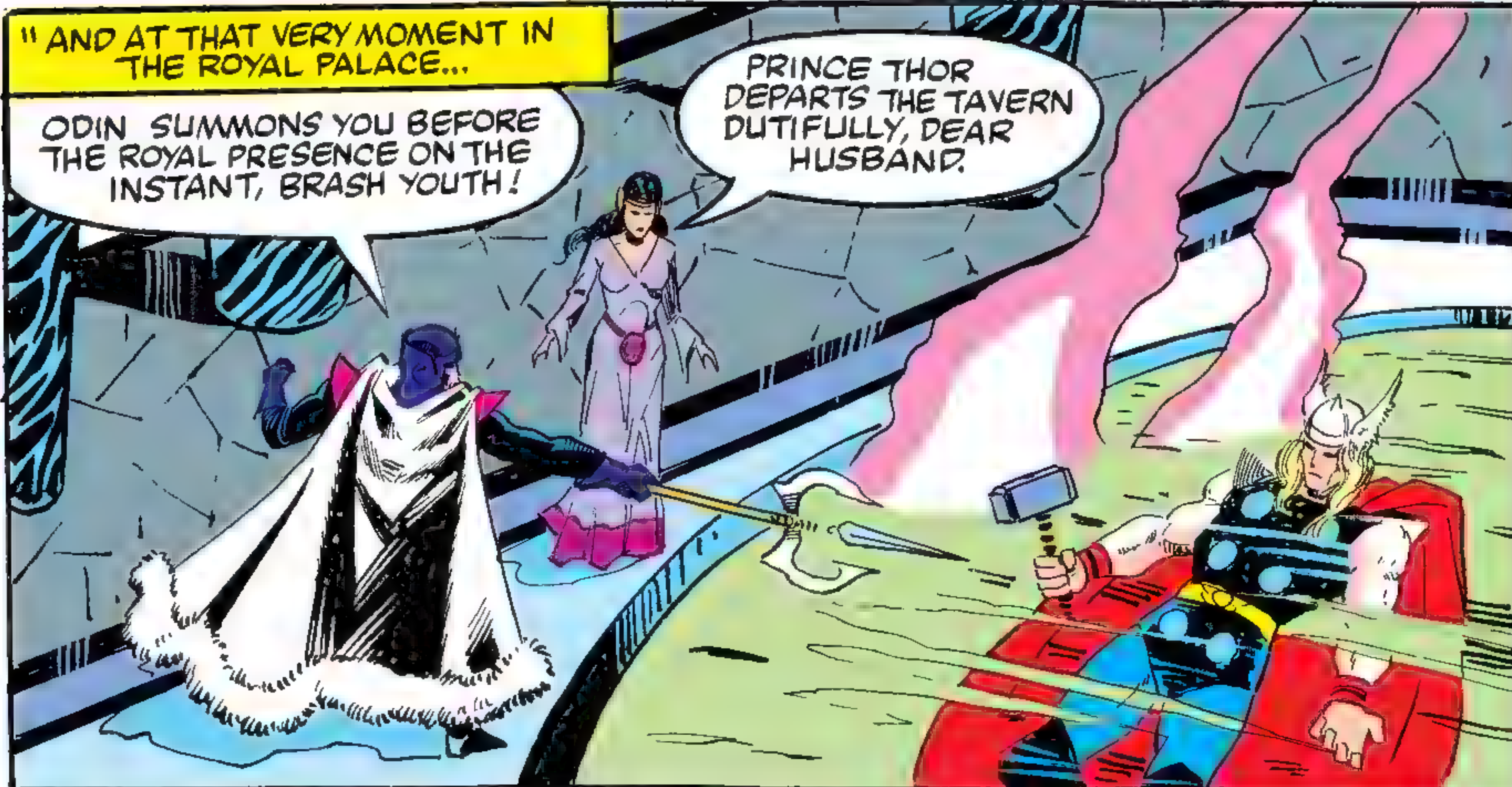
ALLIES OF
GONDOLFF,
LIFT YOUR
BLADES!

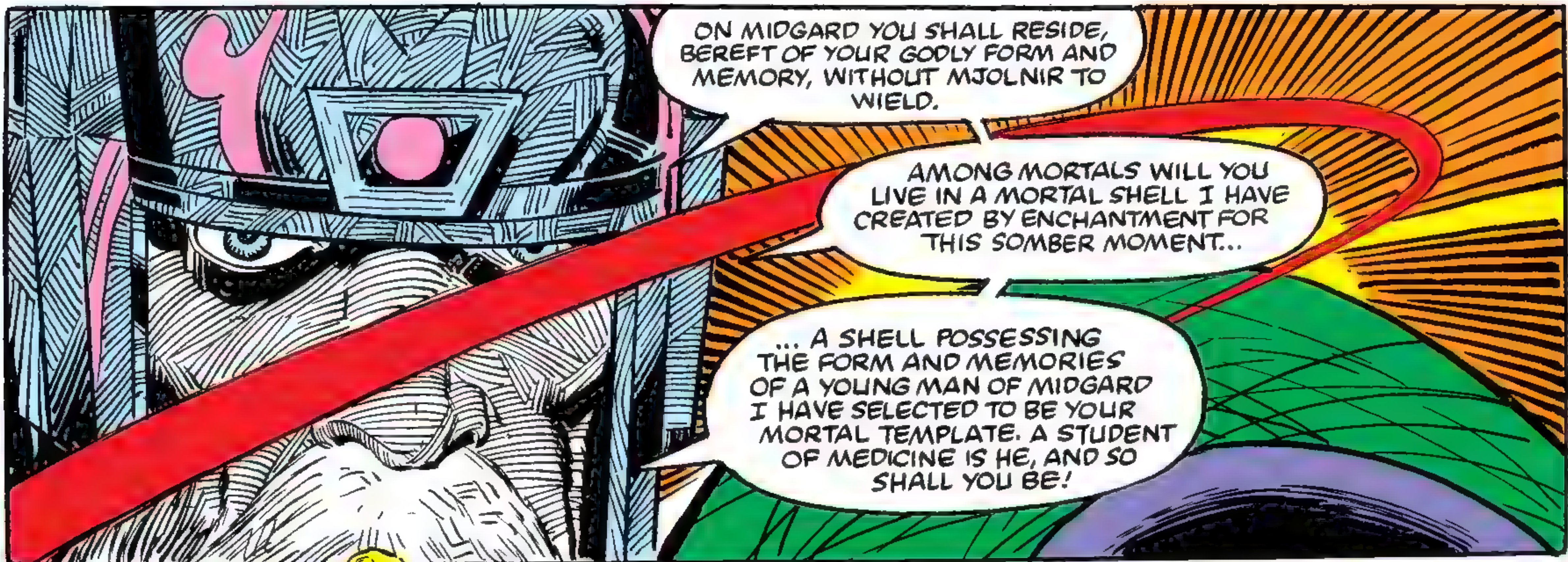


**I SAY
ENOUGH!**

THE VOICE OF ODIN!
CEASE, FELLOWS,
AND DESIST!



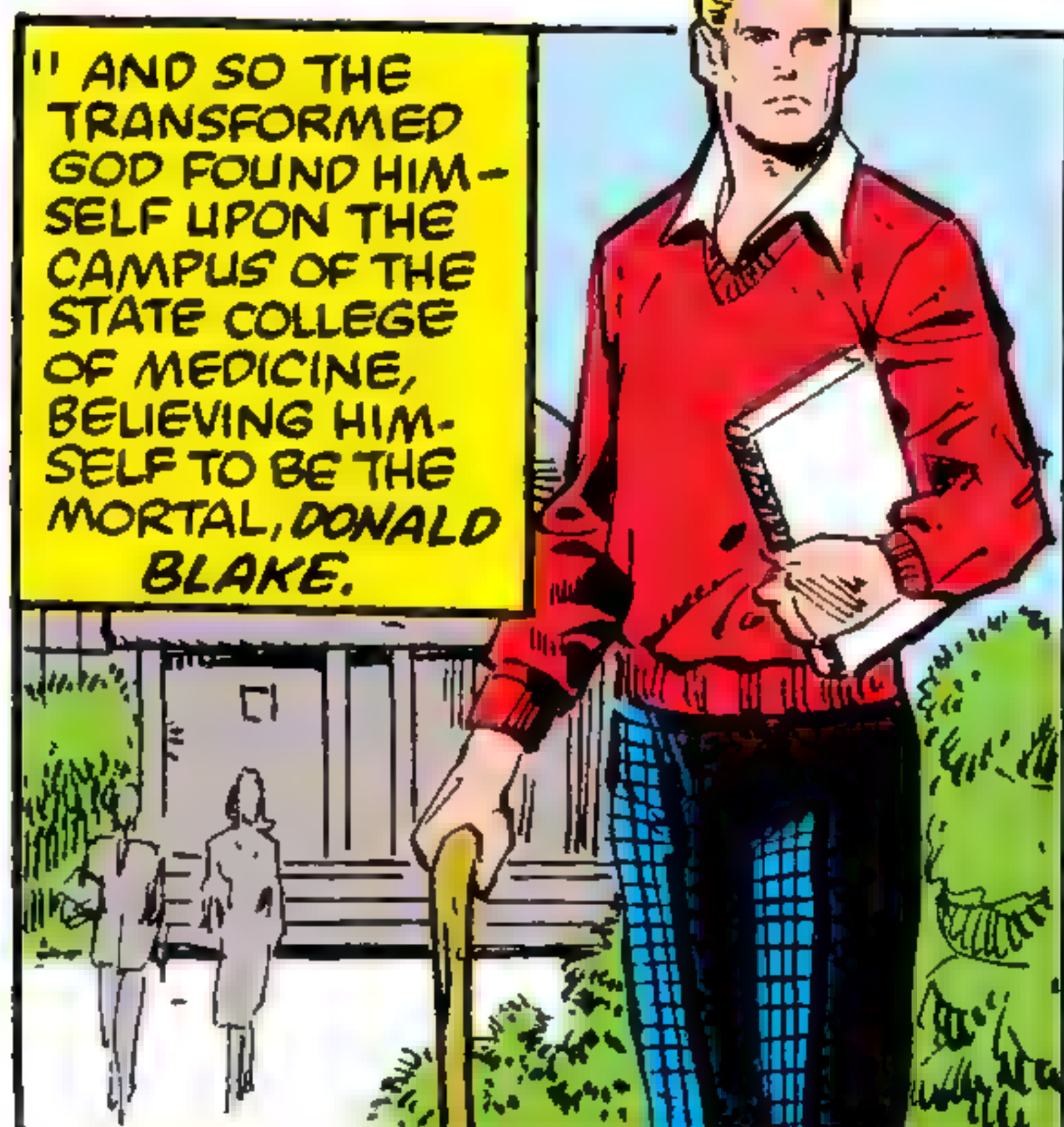




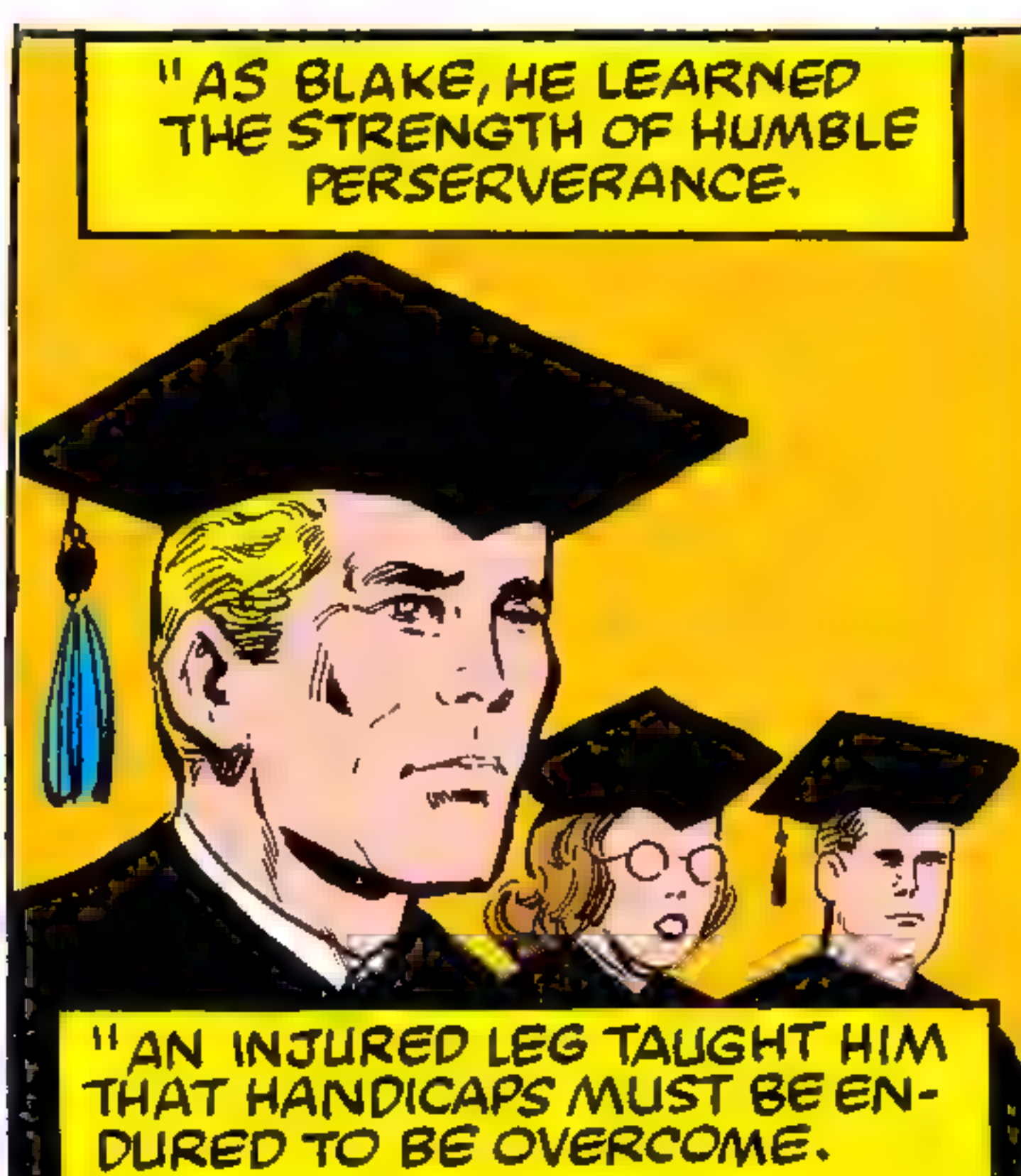
ON MIDGARD YOU SHALL RESIDE, BEREFT OF YOUR GODLY FORM AND MEMORY, WITHOUT MJOLNIR TO WIELD.

AMONG MORTALS WILL YOU LIVE IN A MORTAL SHELL I HAVE CREATED BY ENCHANTMENT FOR THIS SOMBER MOMENT...

... A SHELL POSSESSING THE FORM AND MEMORIES OF A YOUNG MAN OF MIDGARD I HAVE SELECTED TO BE YOUR MORTAL TEMPLATE. A STUDENT OF MEDICINE IS HE, AND SO SHALL YOU BE!

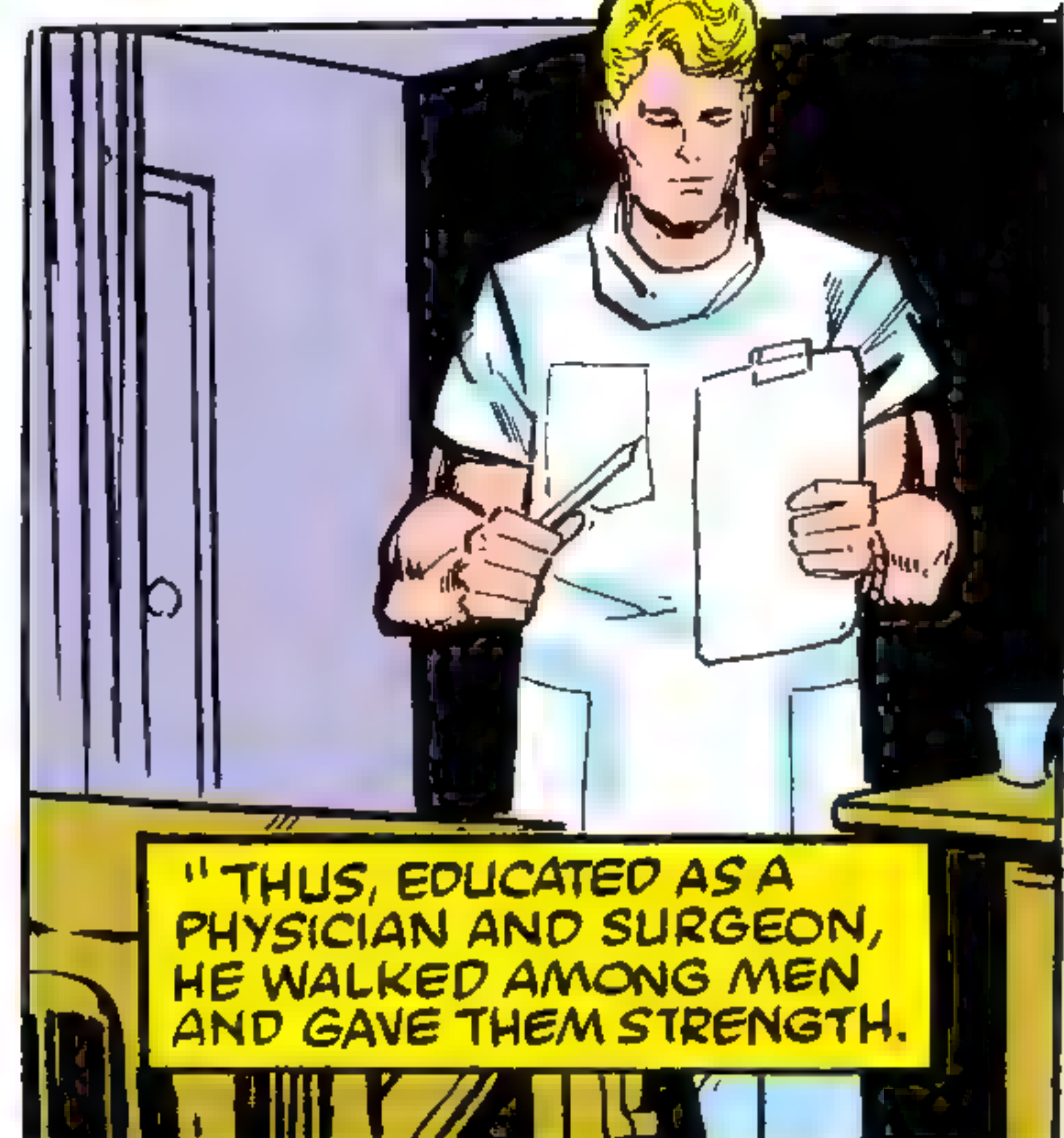


"AND SO THE TRANSFORMED GOD FOUND HIMSELF UPON THE CAMPUS OF THE STATE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, BELIEVING HIMSELF TO BE THE MORTAL, DONALD BLAKE."

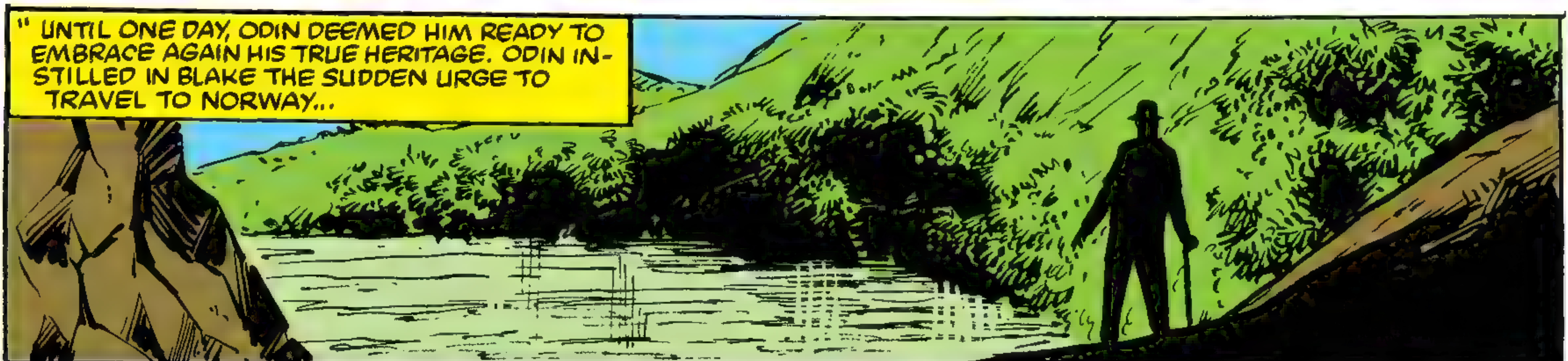


"AS BLAKE, HE LEARNED THE STRENGTH OF HUMBLE PERSISTENCE."

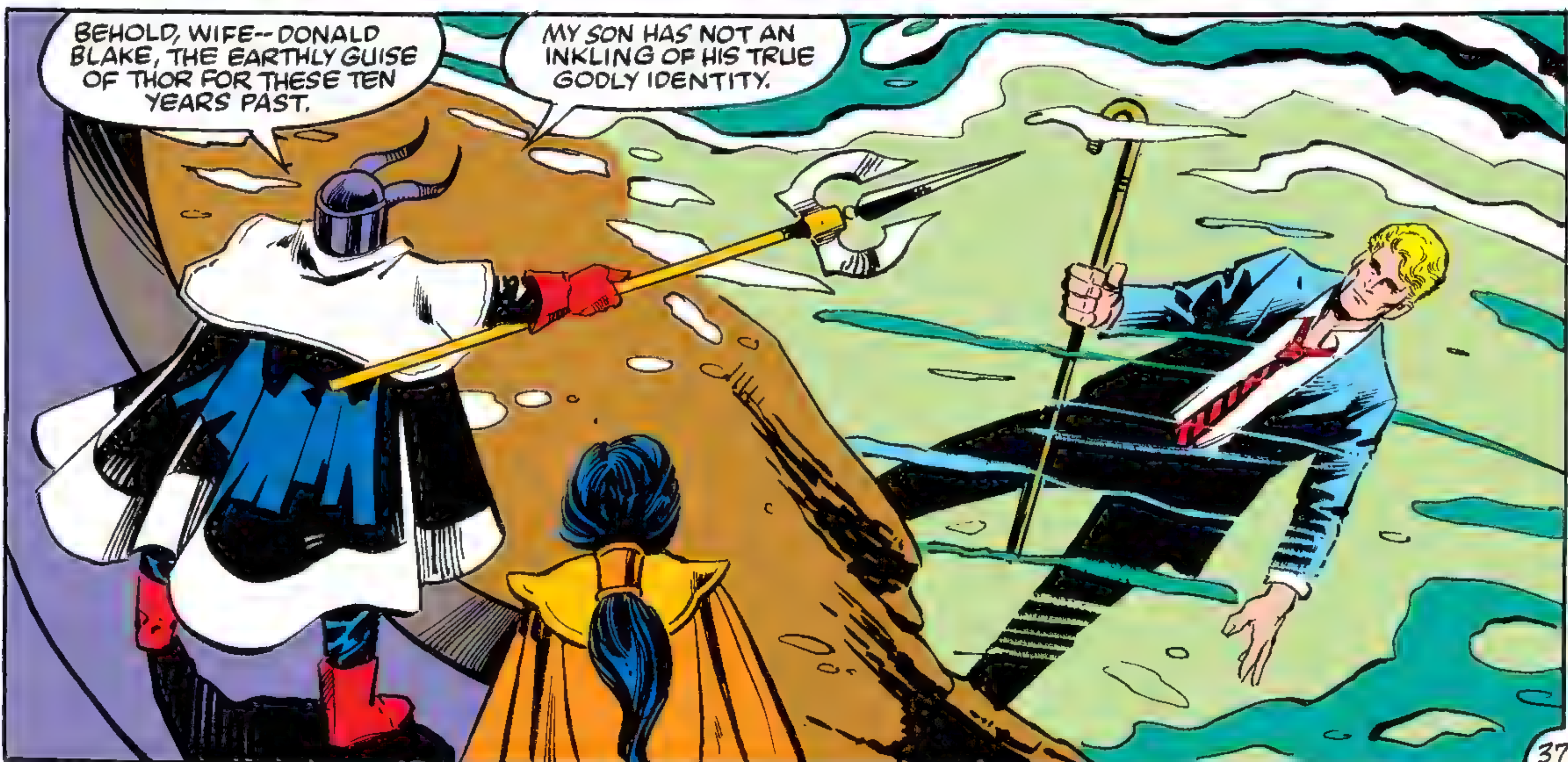
"AN INJURED LEG TAUGHT HIM THAT HANDICAPS MUST BE ENDURED TO BE OVERCOME."



"THUS, EDUCATED AS A PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON, HE WALKED AMONG MEN AND GAVE THEM STRENGTH."



"UNTIL ONE DAY, ODIN DEEMED HIM READY TO EMBRACE AGAIN HIS TRUE HERITAGE. ODIN INSTILLED IN BLAKE THE SUDDEN URGE TO TRAVEL TO NORWAY..."



BEHOLD, WIFE-- DONALD BLAKE, THE EARTHLY GUISE OF THOR FOR THESE TEN YEARS PAST.

MY SON HAS NOT AN INKLING OF HIS TRUE GODLY IDENTITY.

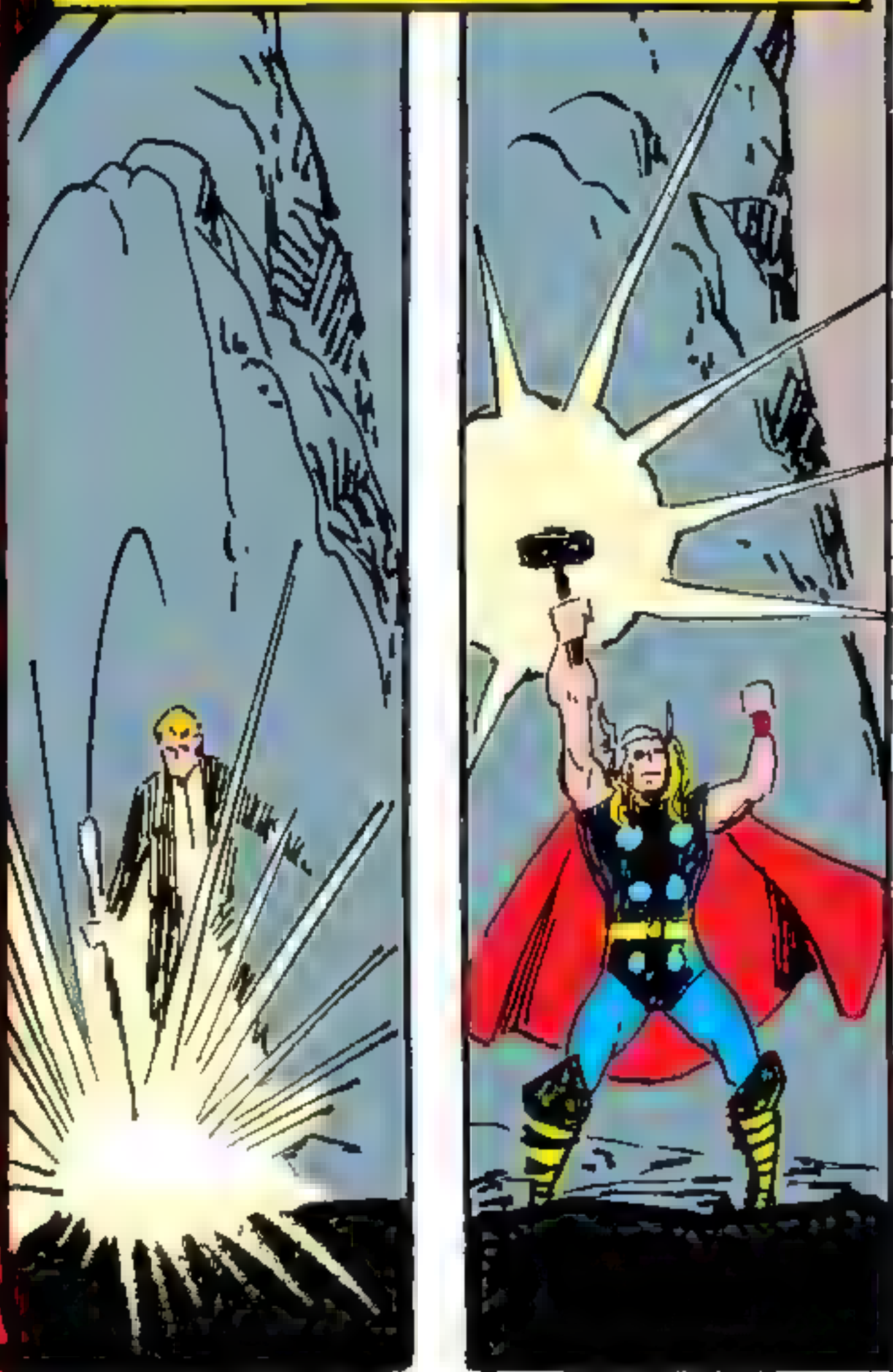
I HAVE PLACED THE HAMMER, MJOLNIR, DISGUISED AS A CANE, WITHIN THE CAVE OF THOR'S BIRTH.

I HAVE ARRANGED FOR HIM TO DISCOVER IT.

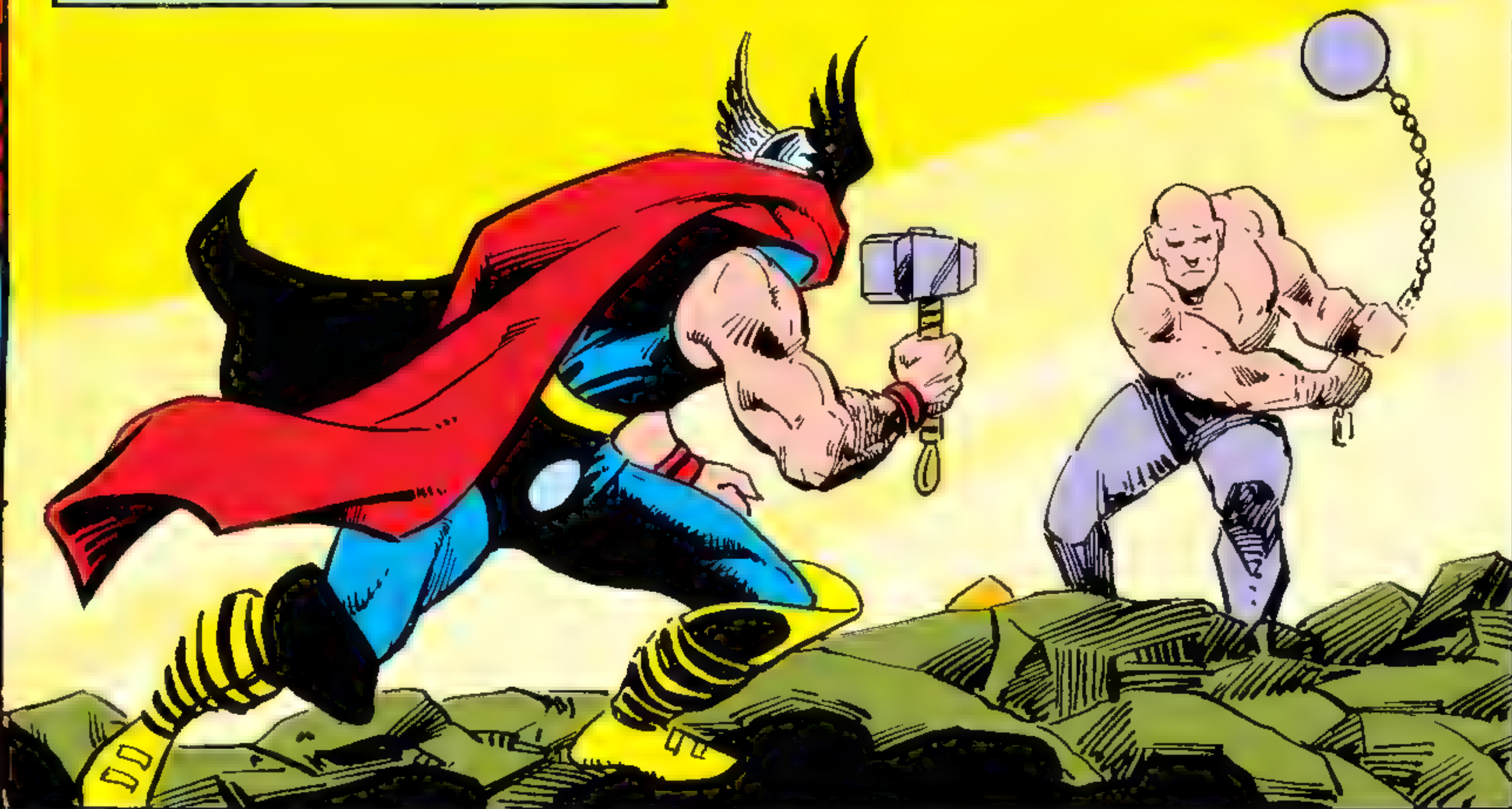
"NOW, BY TAPPING IT TO THE GROUND, HE CAN REGAIN HIS GODLY STATURE AND POWER.

"BUT I SHALL STILL WITHHOLD MEMORY OF HIS TRUE HERITAGE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS I DEEM HIM READY.

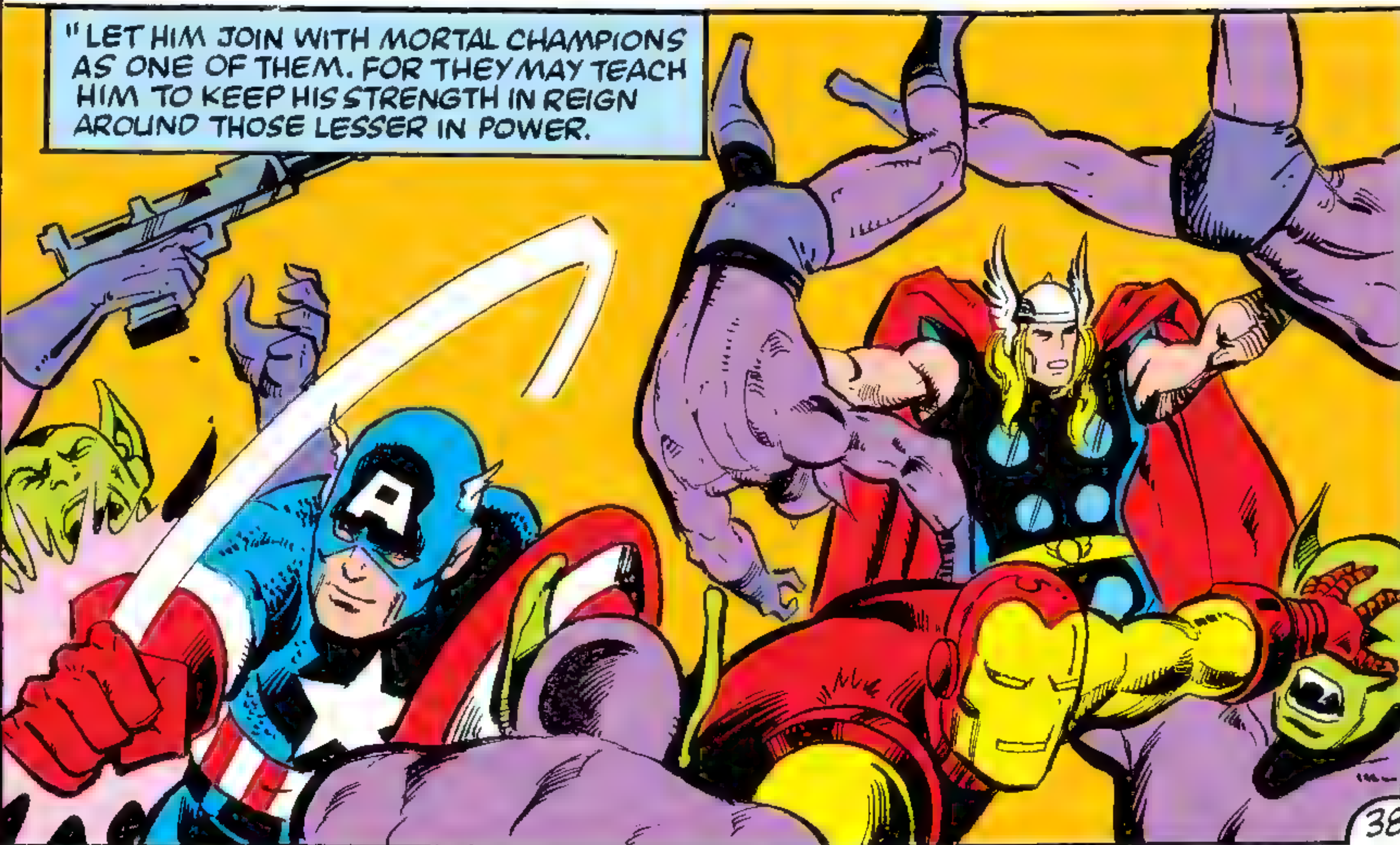
"LET HIM THINK HE IS TRULY A MORTAL WITH A GOD'S POWER AS HE COMBATS MIDGARD'S EXTRATERRESTRIAL FOES...

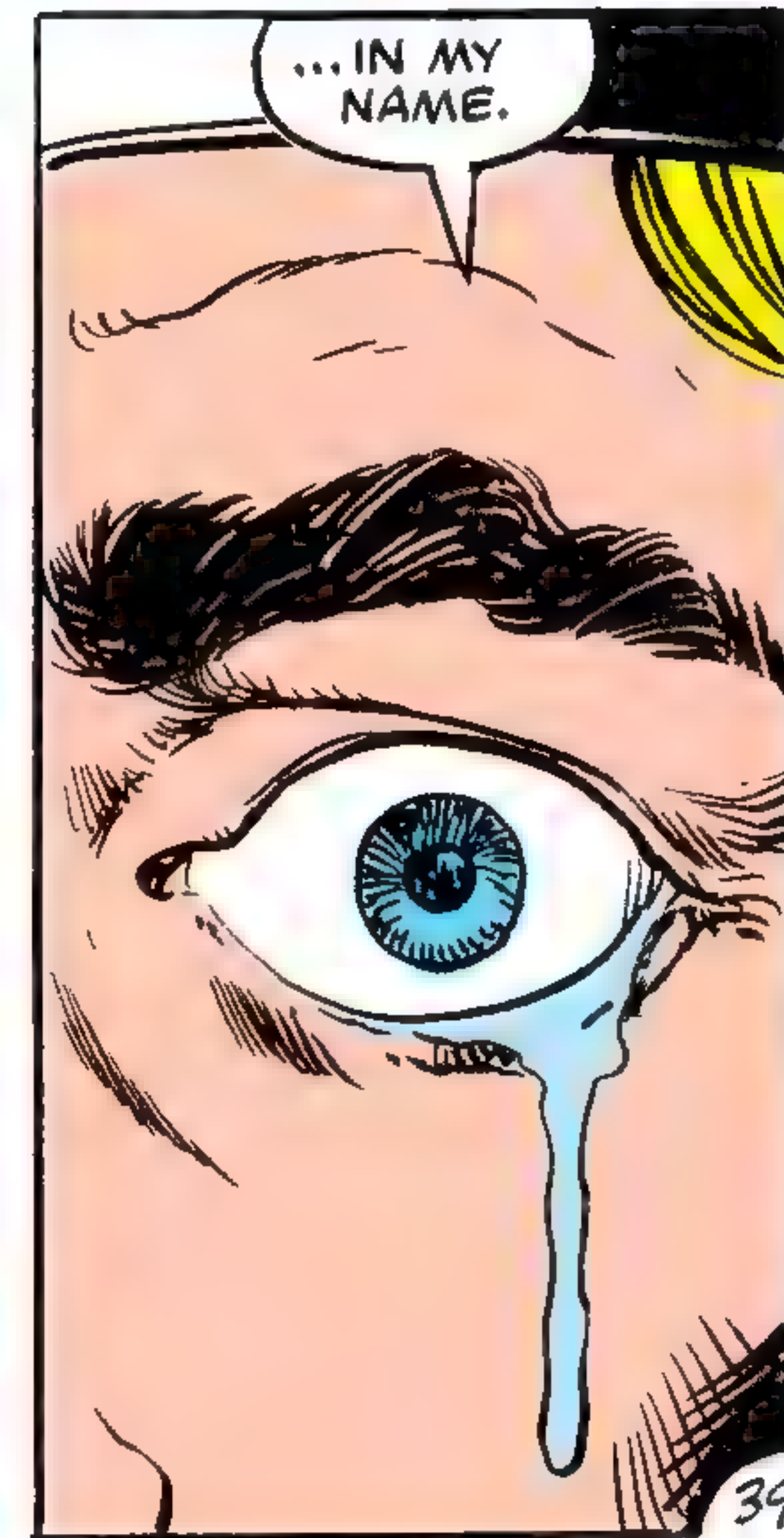
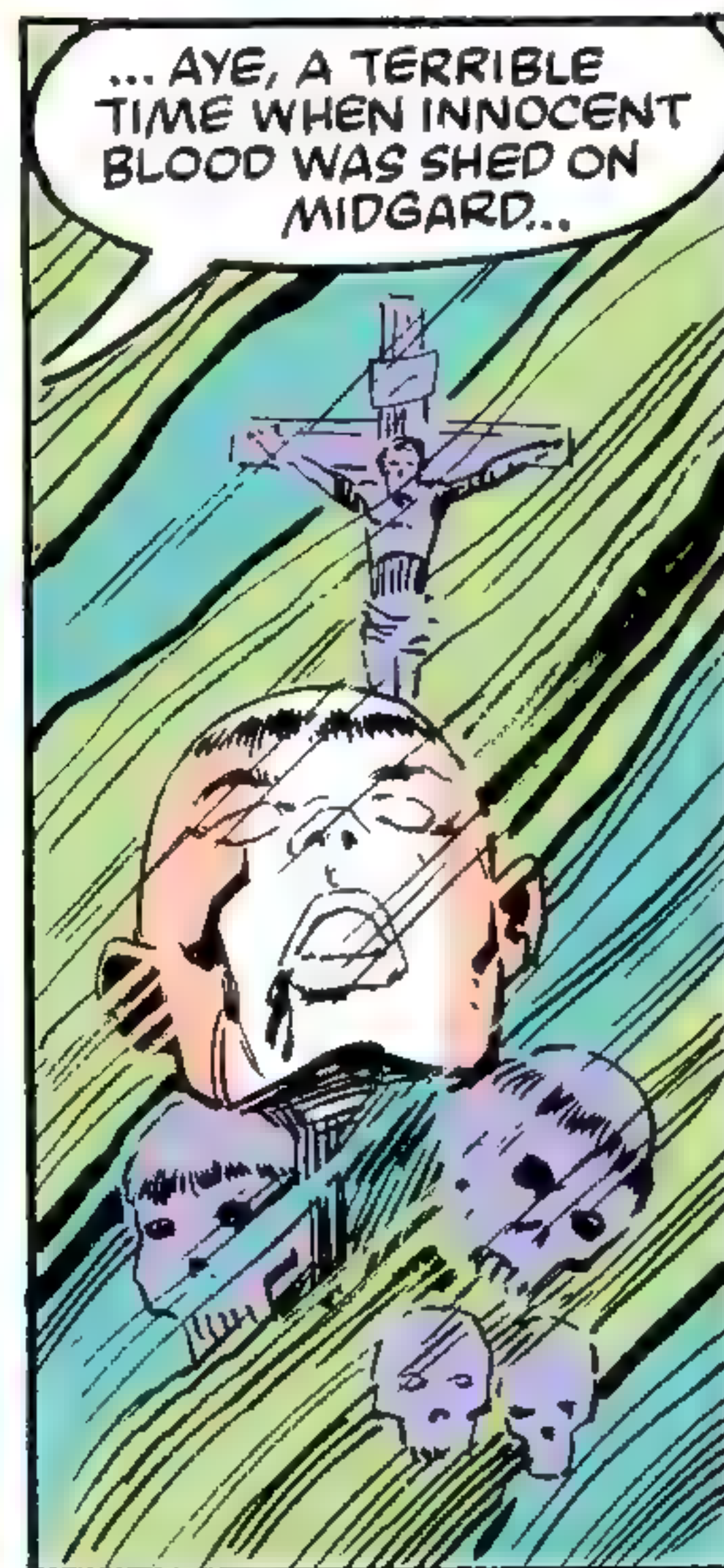
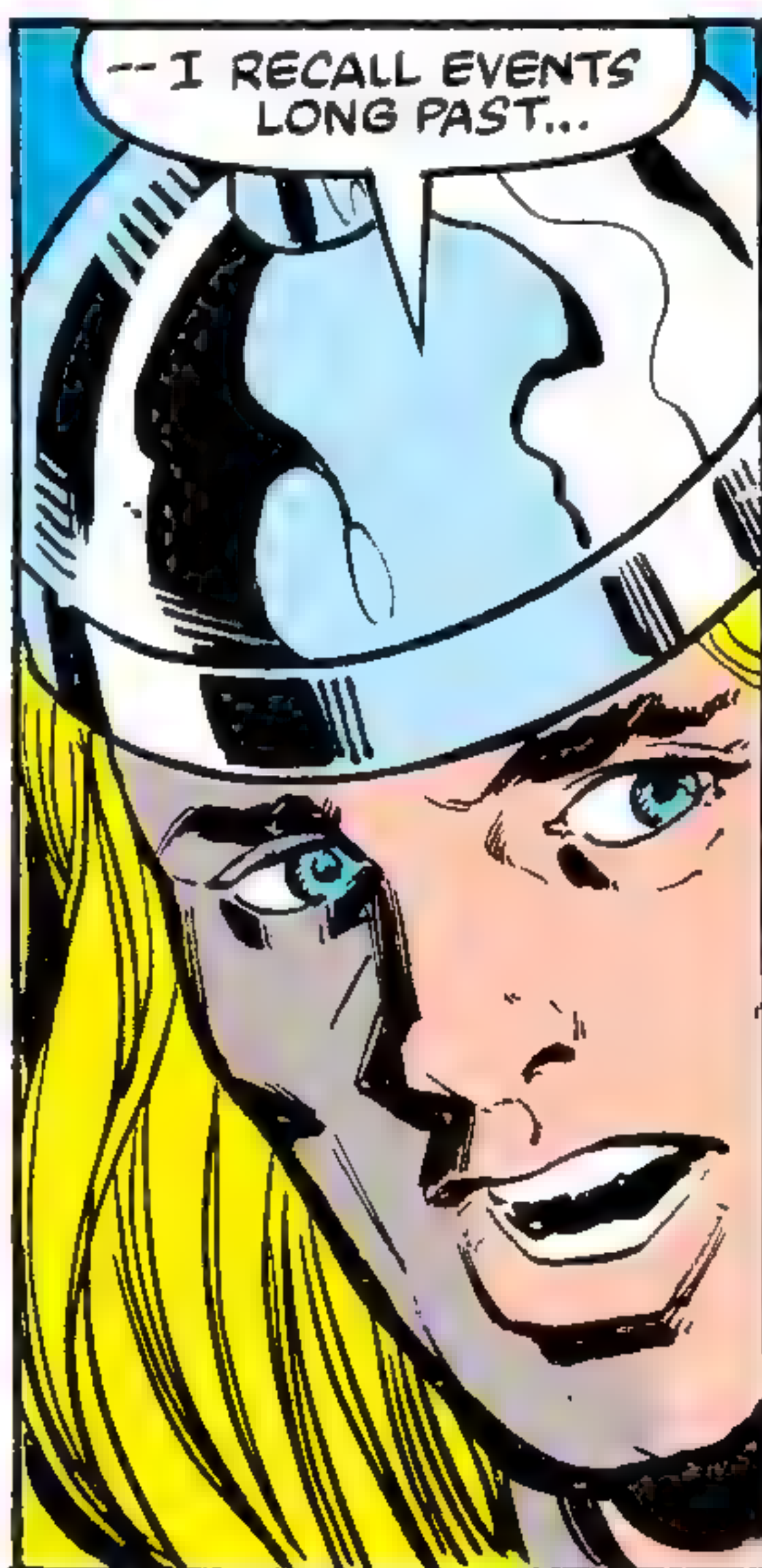
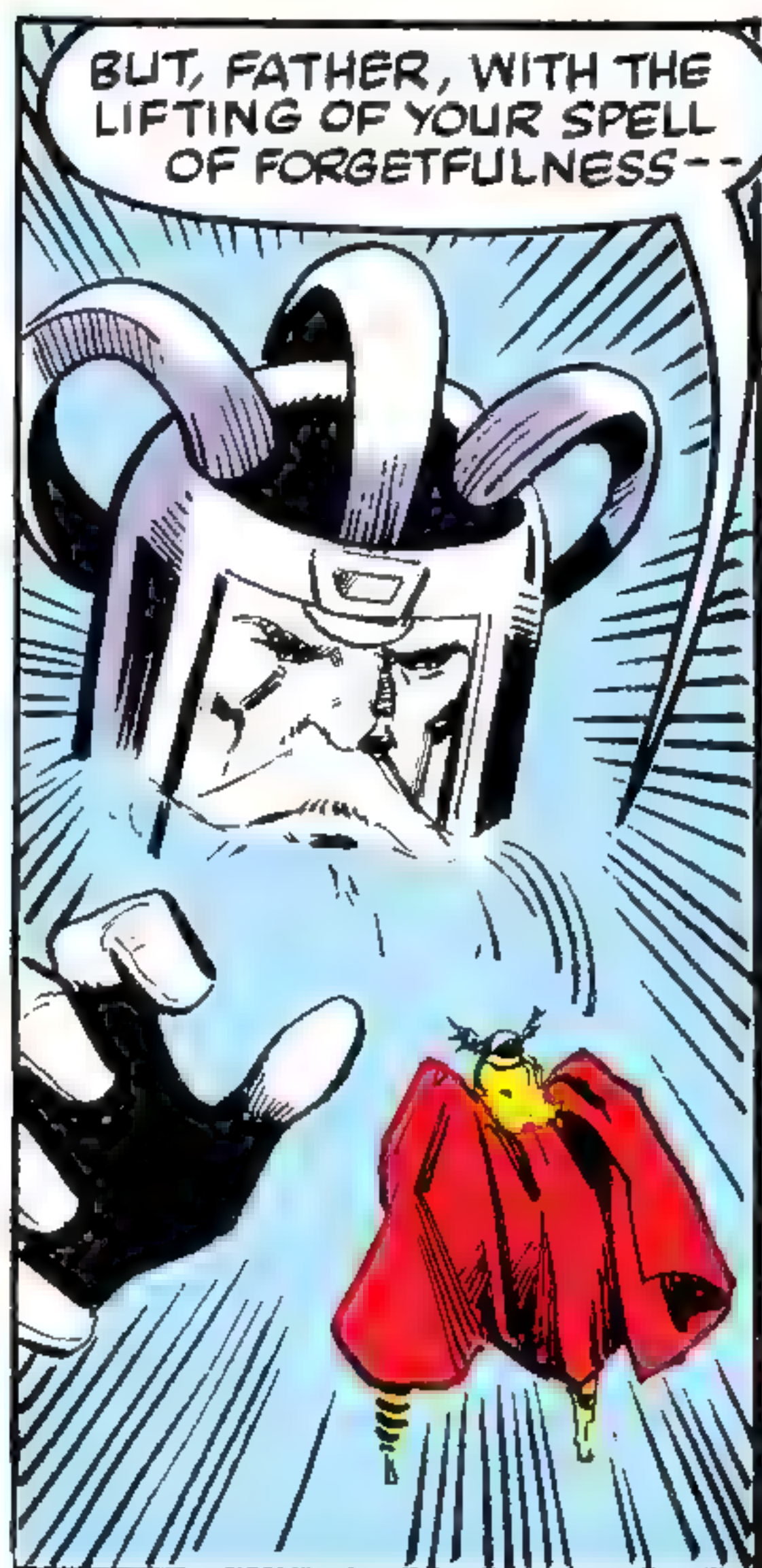
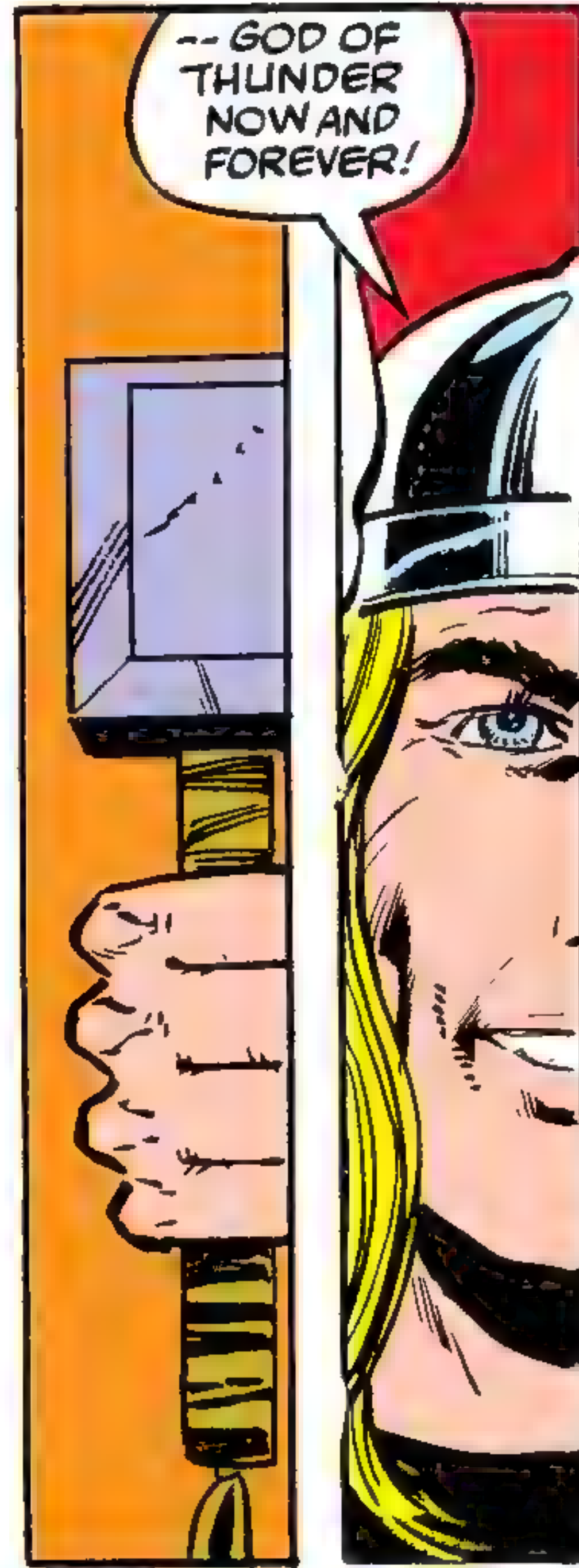
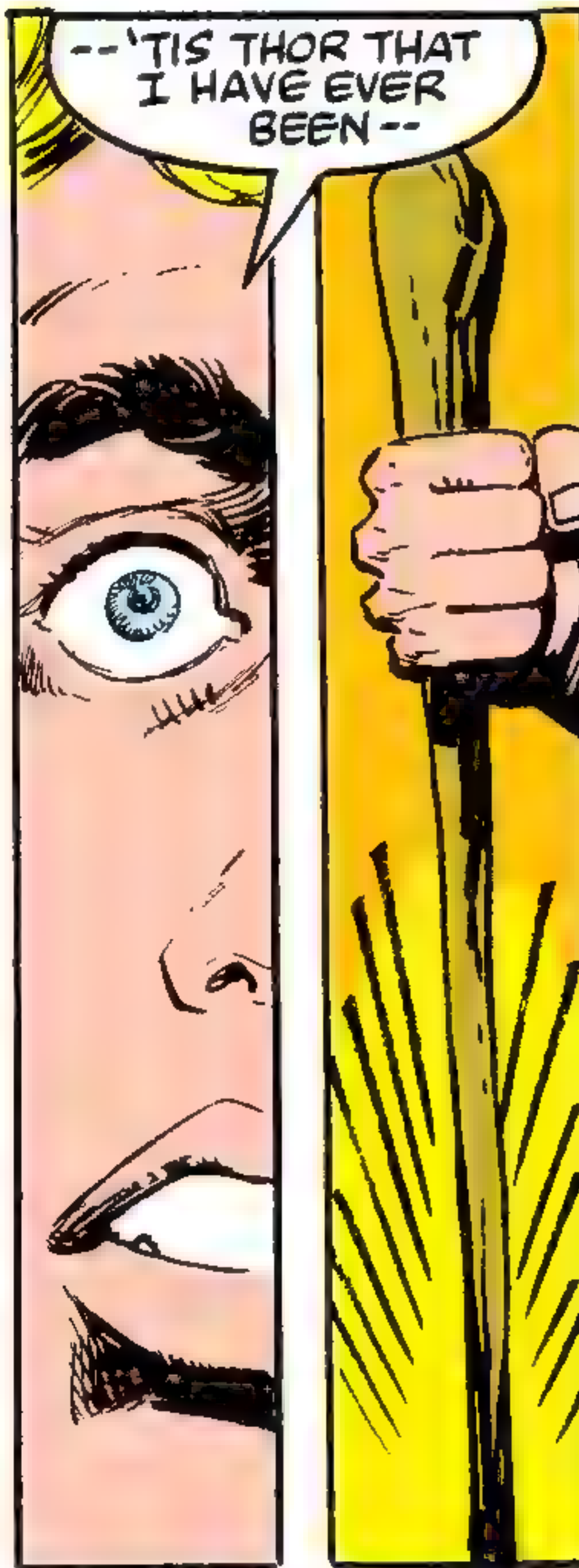
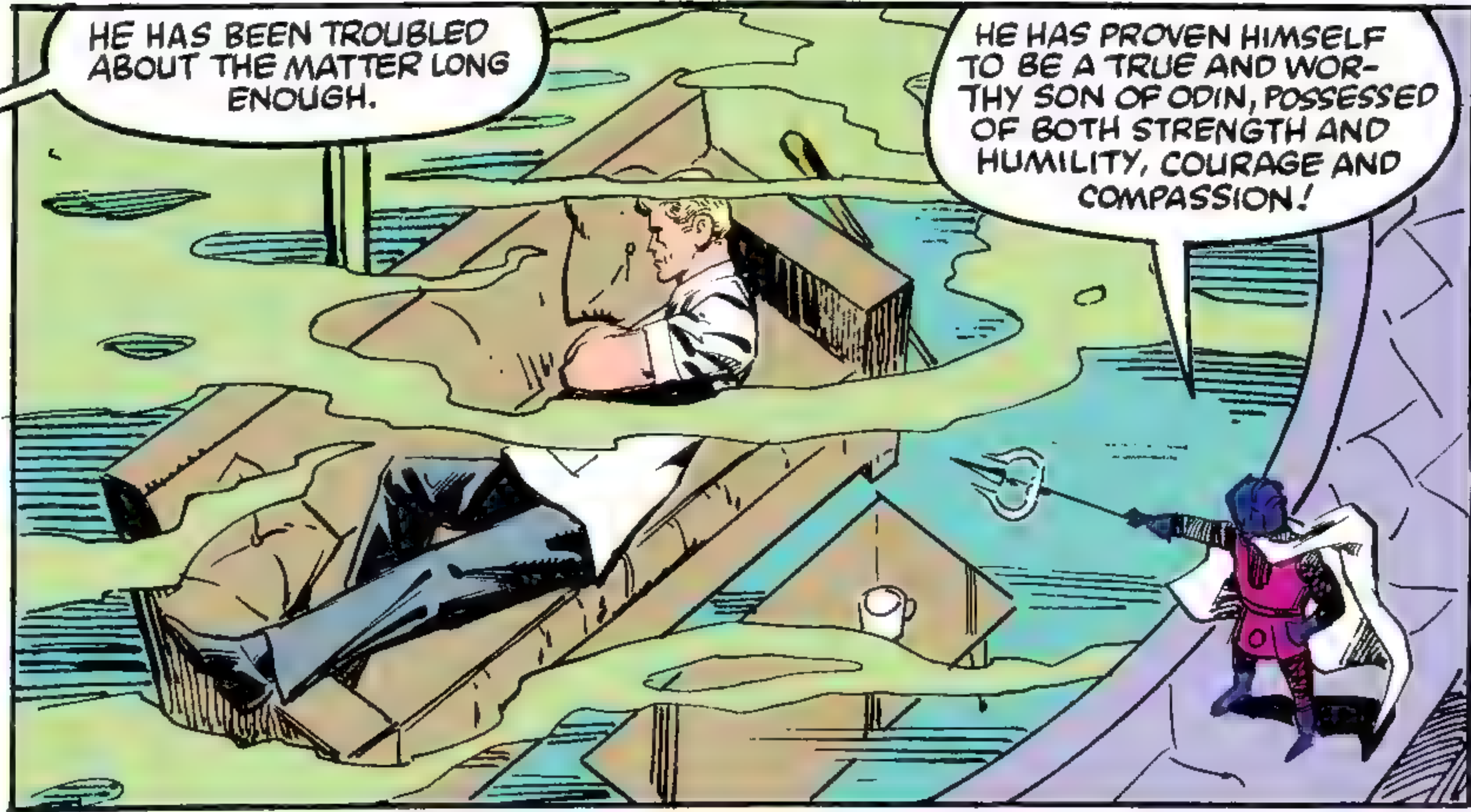
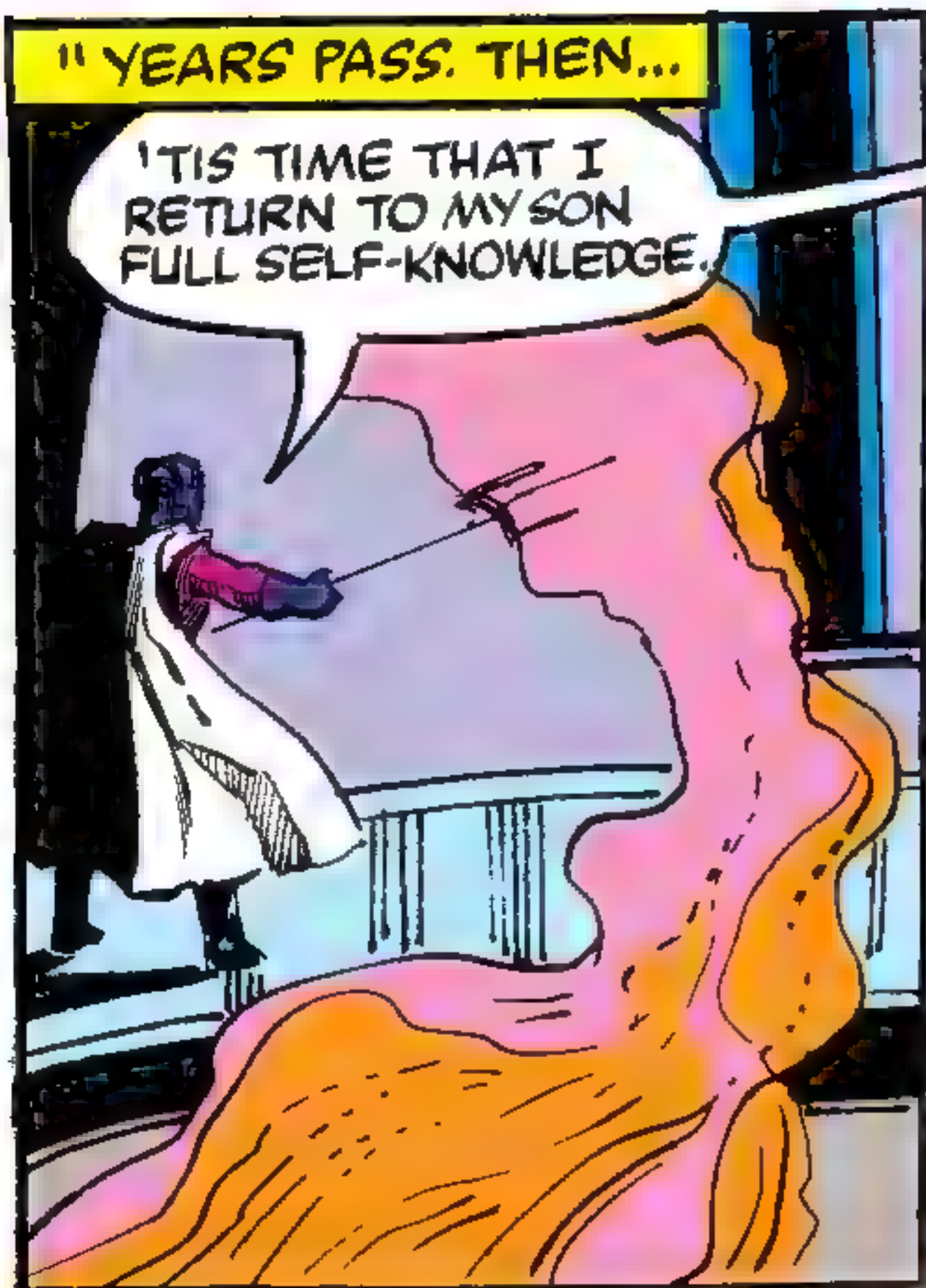


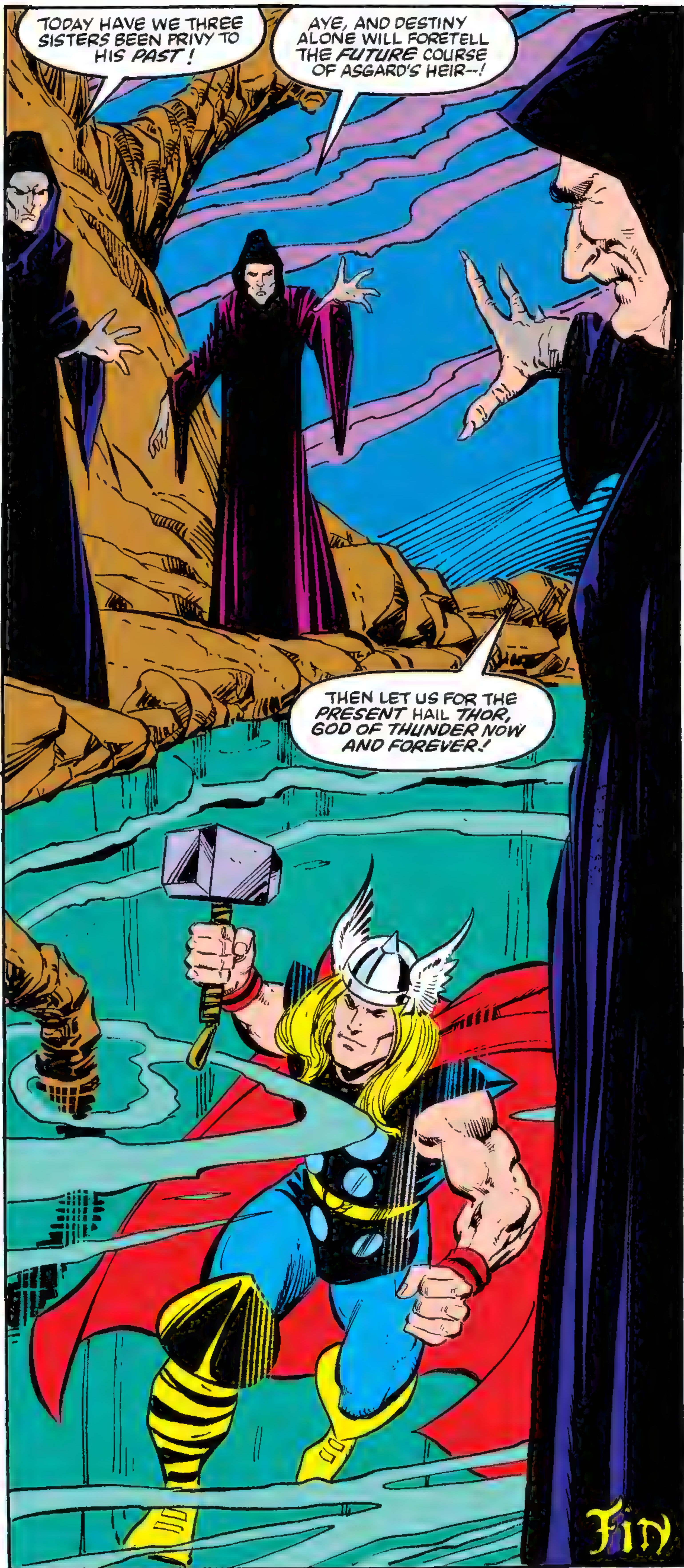
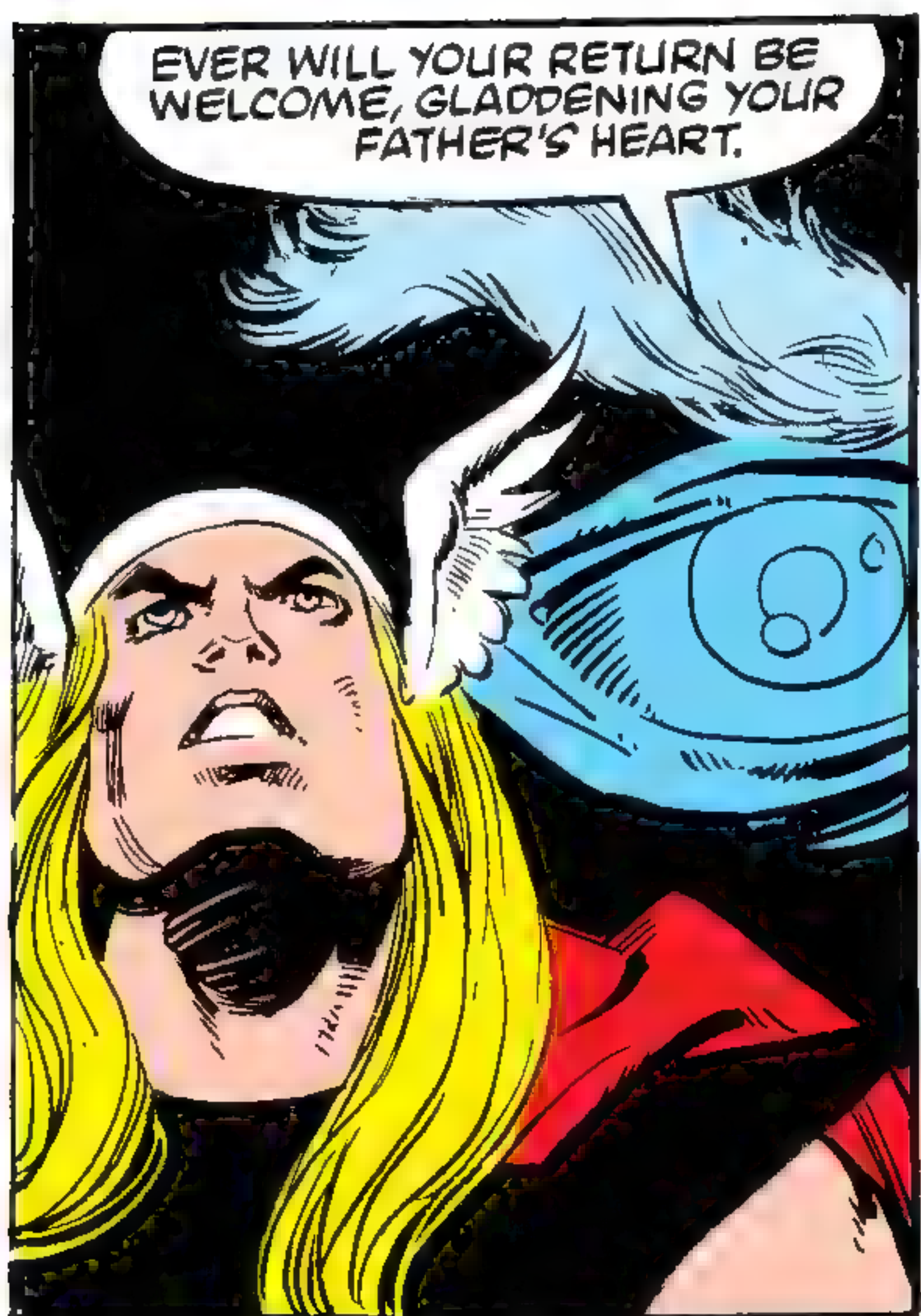
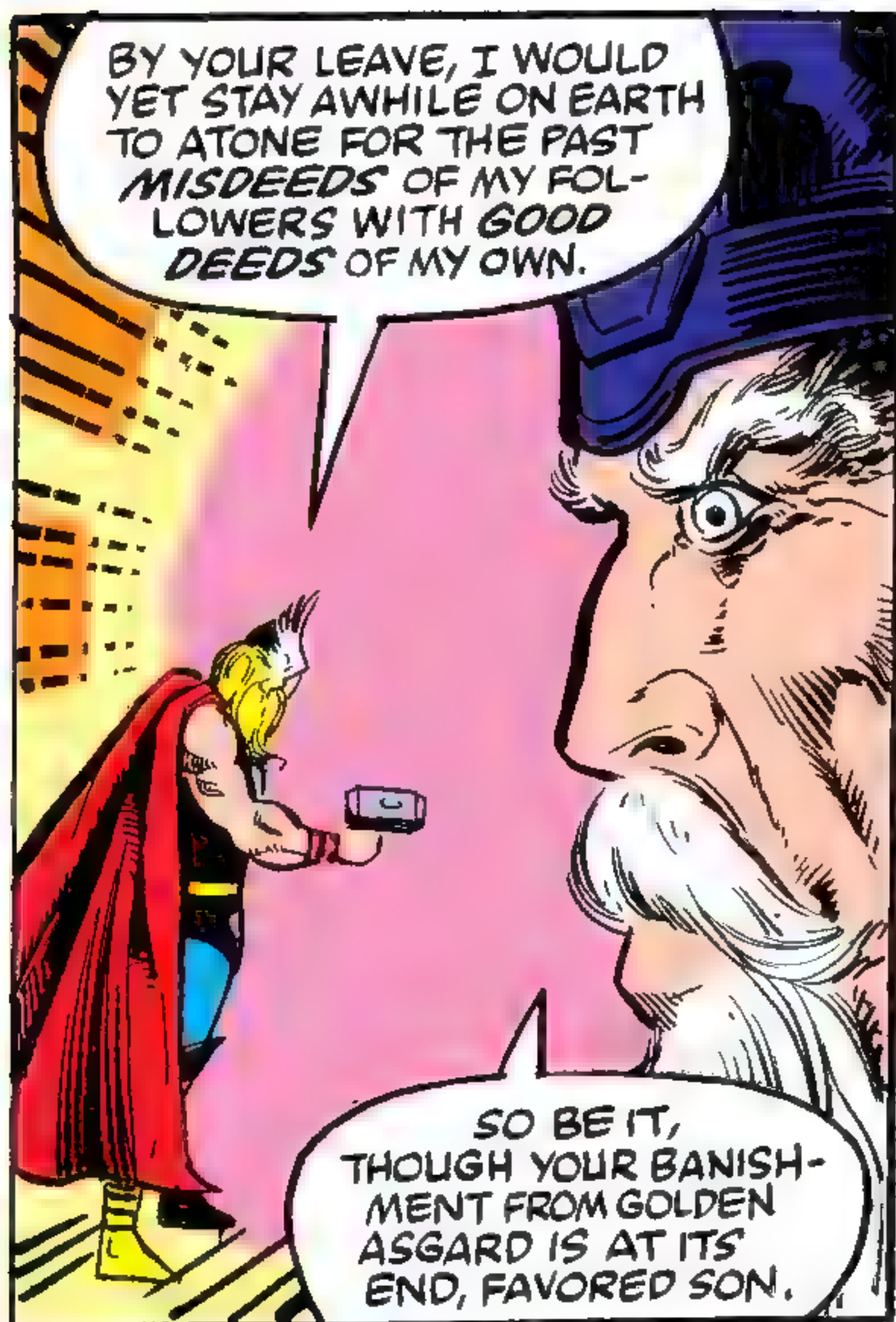
"...AS WELL AS MORTALS OF VAST POWER.



"LET HIM JOIN WITH MORTAL CHAMPIONS AS ONE OF THEM. FOR THEY MAY TEACH HIM TO KEEP HIS STRENGTH IN REIGN AROUND THOSE LESSER IN POWER.







MARVEL®
GRAPHIC
NOVEL

the mighty THOR®



I, whom the gods would destroy

JAMES SHOOTER

JAMES OWSLEY

PAUL RYAN

VINCE COLLETA

Stan Lee Presents:
A MARVEL© GRAPHIC NOVEL

the mighty
THOR in

I, WHOM THE GODS WOULD DESTROY

PLOTTED BY JIM SHOOTER

WRITTEN BY JIM OWSLEY

DRAWN BY PAUL RYAN

INKS BY VINCE COLLETTA

COLORS BY BOB SHAREN

LETTERS BY RICK PARKER

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LOGO BY ALEX JAY

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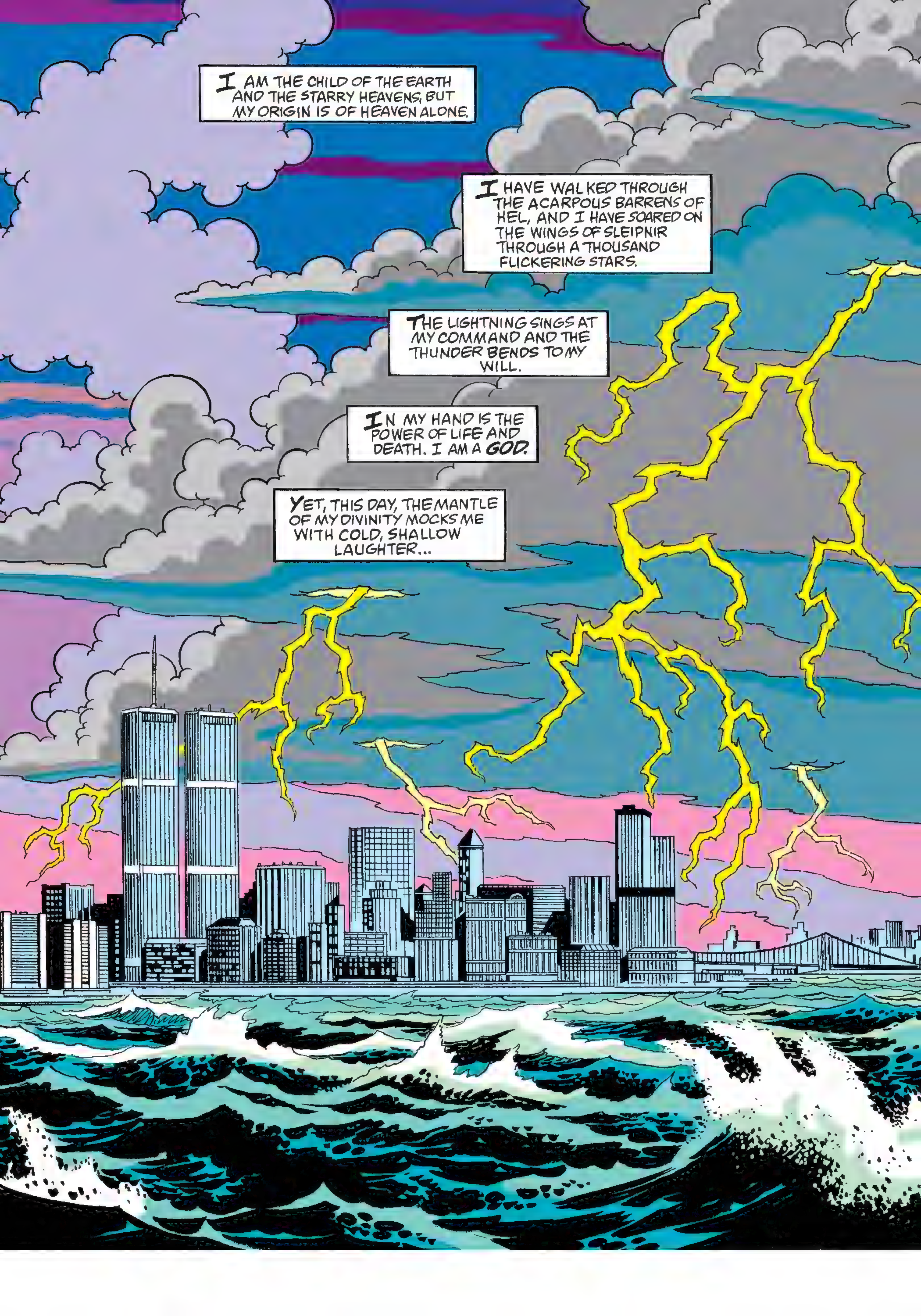
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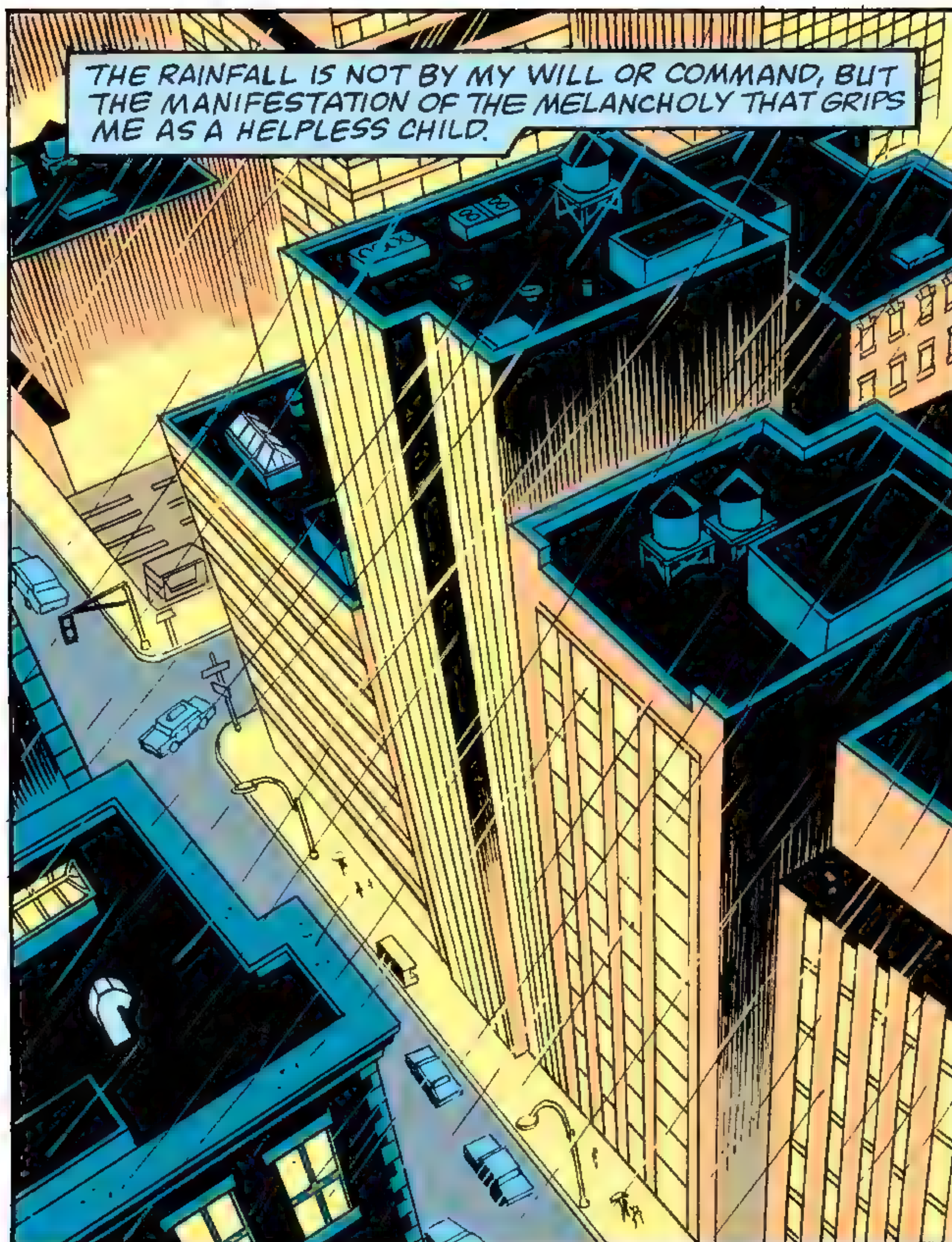
I AM THE CHILD OF THE EARTH
AND THE STARRY HEAVENS, BUT
MY ORIGIN IS OF HEAVEN ALONE.

I HAVE WALKED THROUGH
THE ACARPOUS BARRENS OF
HEL, AND I HAVE SOARED ON
THE WINGS OF SLEIPNIR
THROUGH A THOUSAND
FLICKERING STARS.

THE LIGHTNING SINGS AT
MY COMMAND AND THE
THUNDER BENDS TO MY
WILL.

IN MY HAND IS THE
POWER OF LIFE AND
DEATH. I AM A **GOD**.

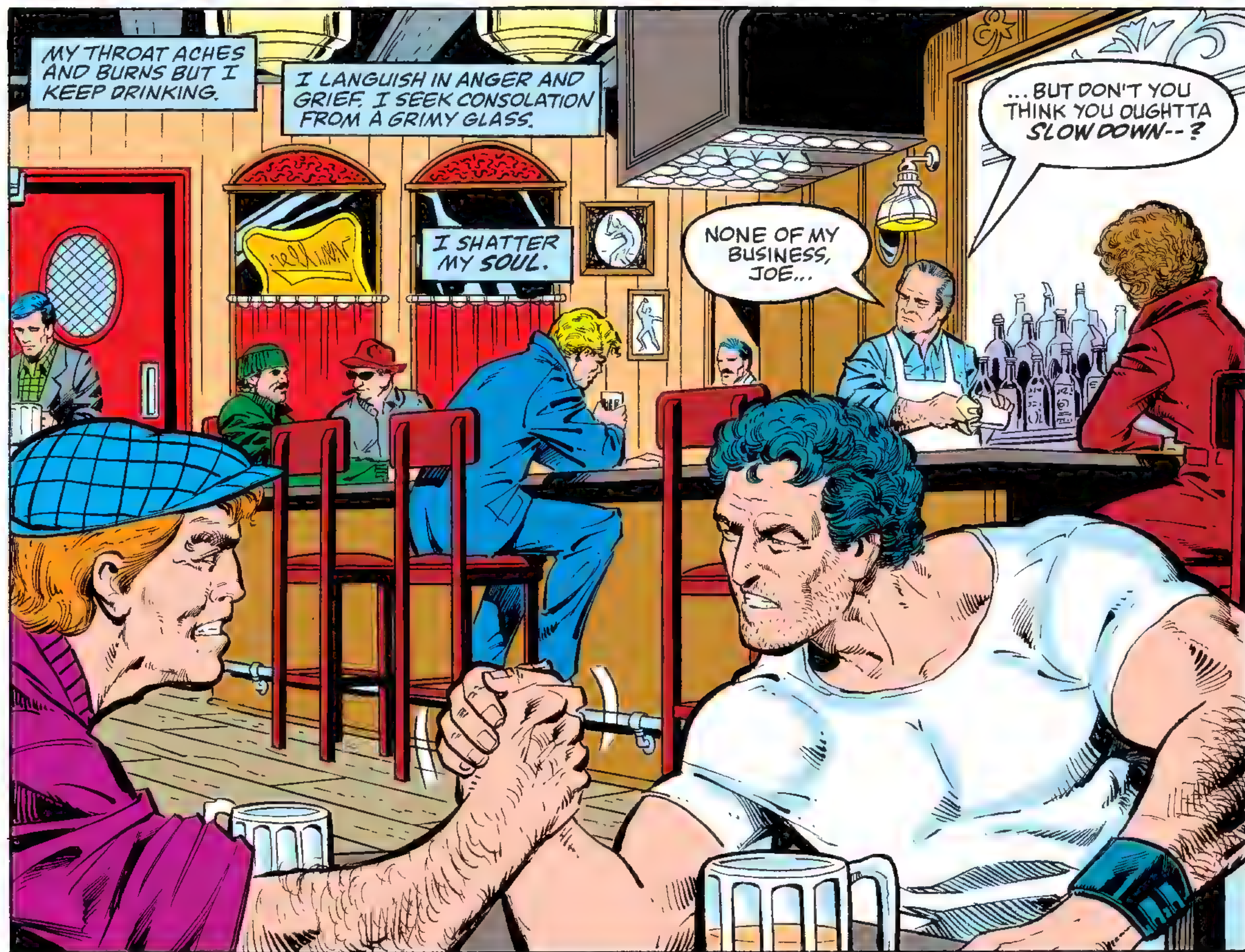
YET, THIS DAY, THE MANTLE
OF MY DIVINITY MOCKS ME
WITH COLD, SHALLOW
LAUGHTER...



THE RAINFALL IS NOT BY MY WILL OR COMMAND, BUT THE MANIFESTATION OF THE MELANCHOLY THAT GRIPS ME AS A HELPLESS CHILD.



TEARS OF A WEeping GOD.



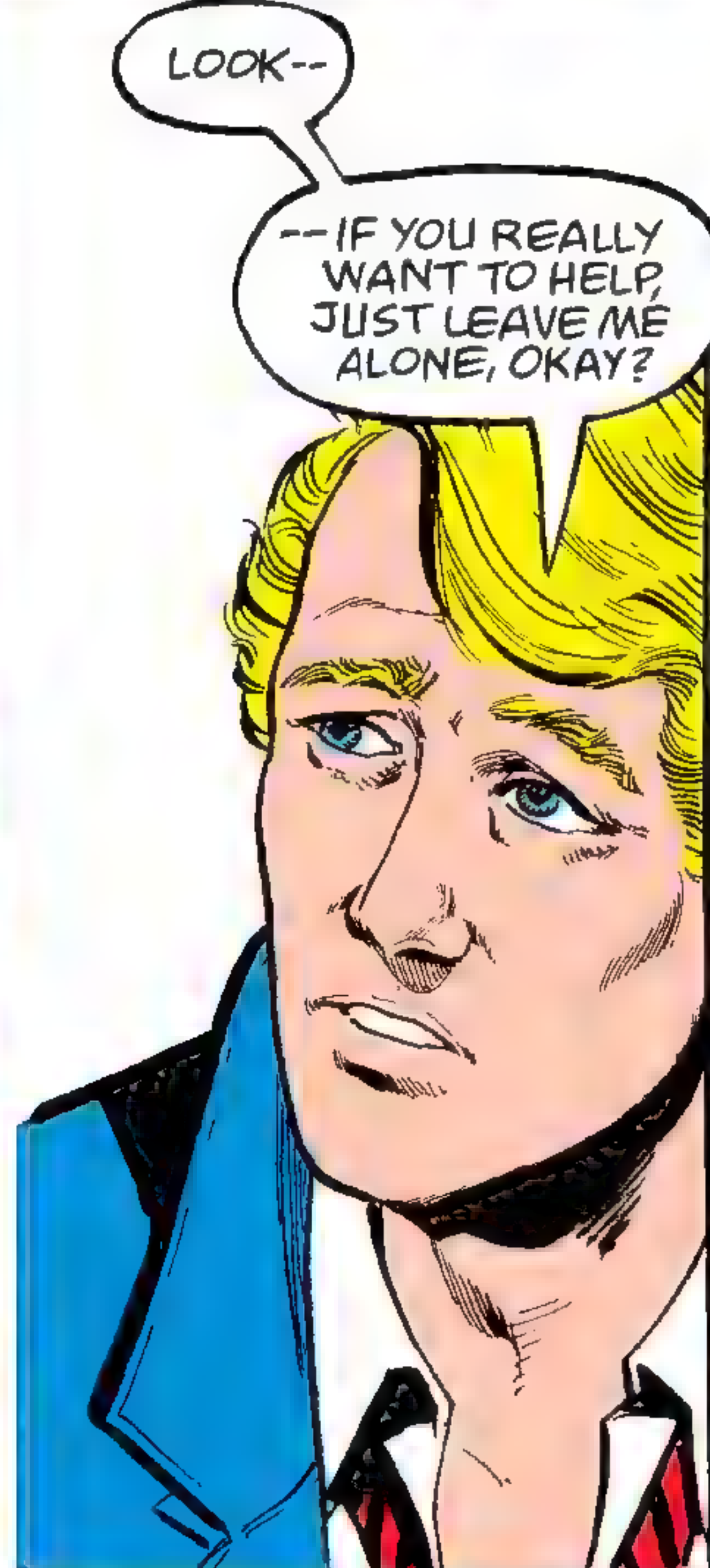
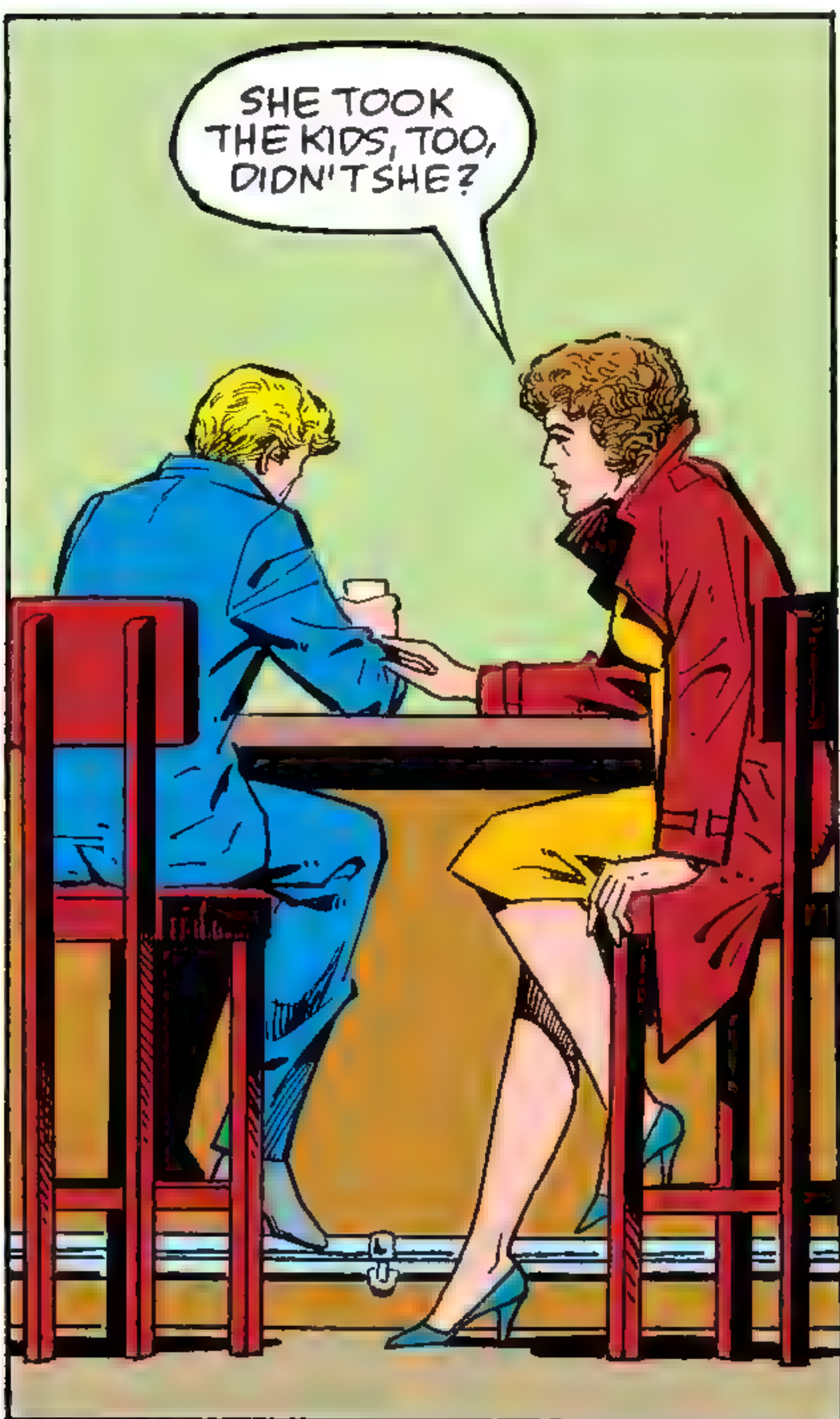
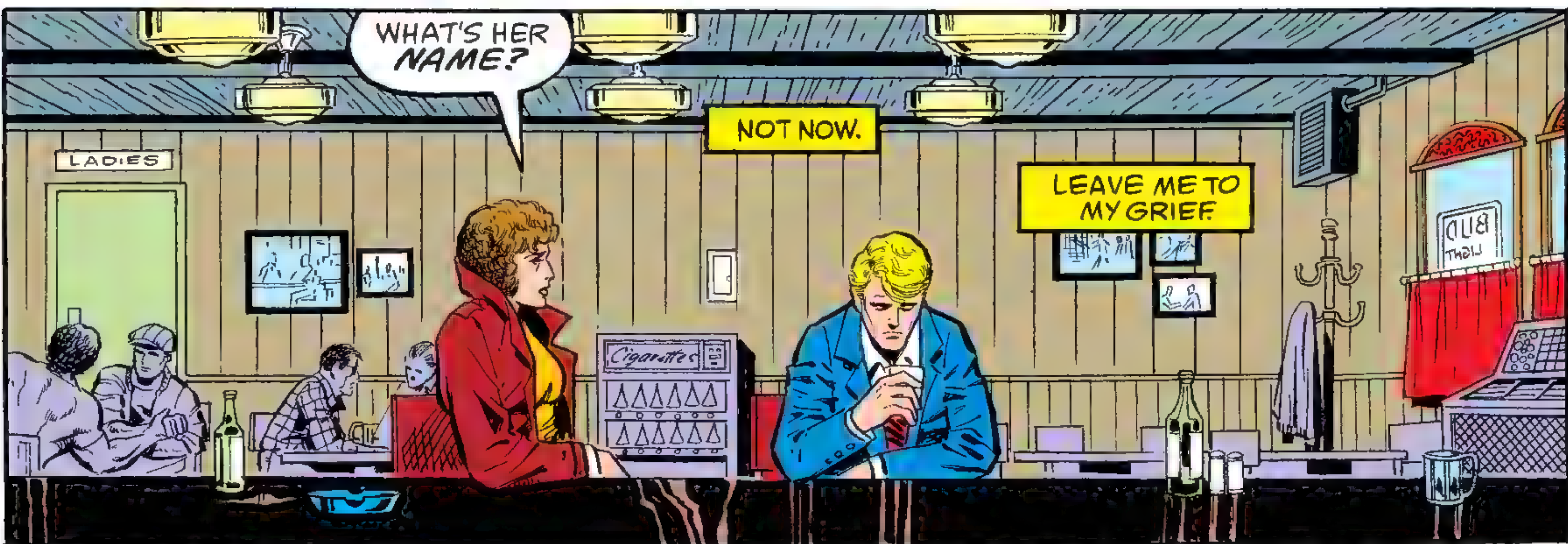
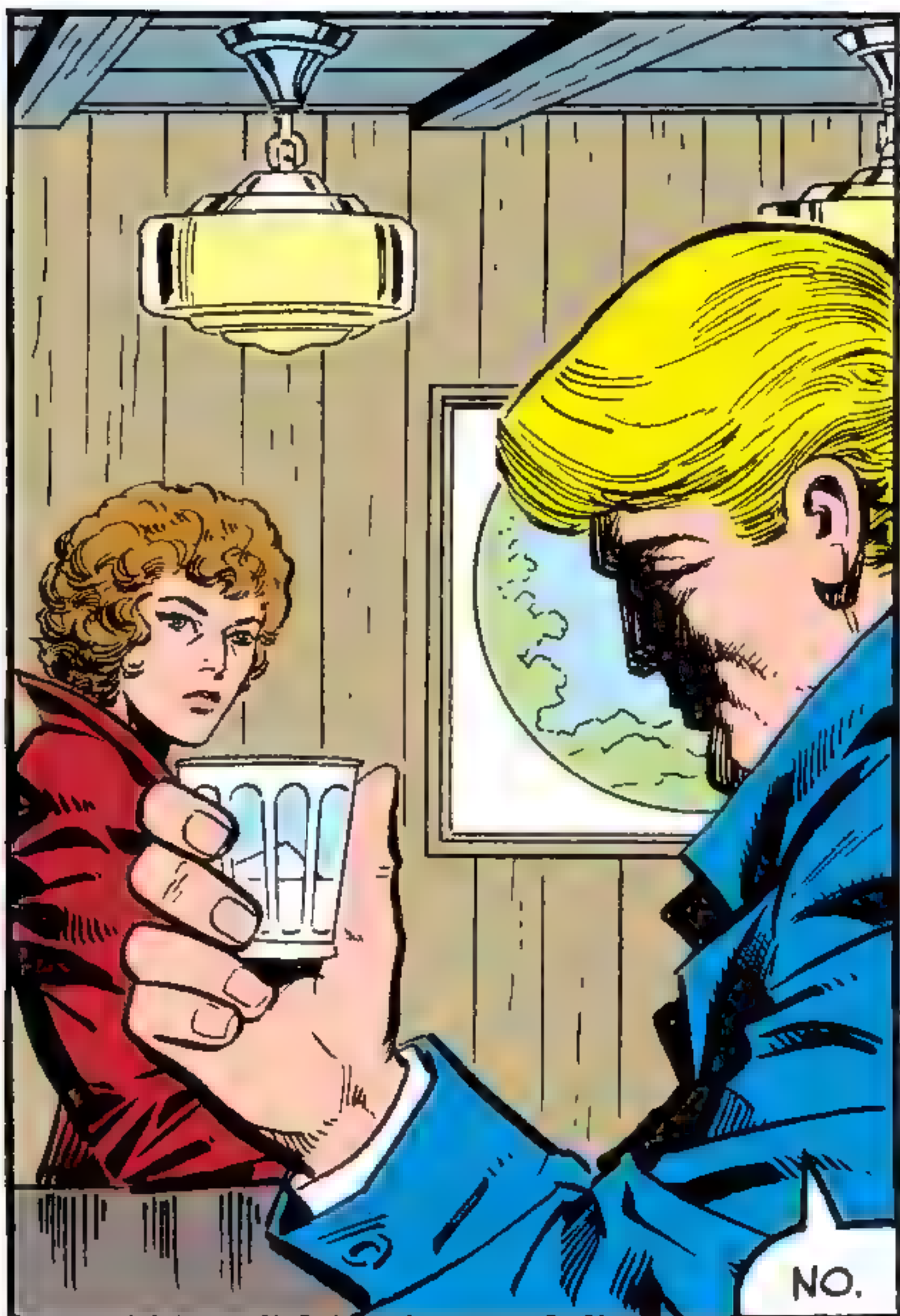
MY THROAT ACHES AND BURNS BUT I KEEP DRINKING.

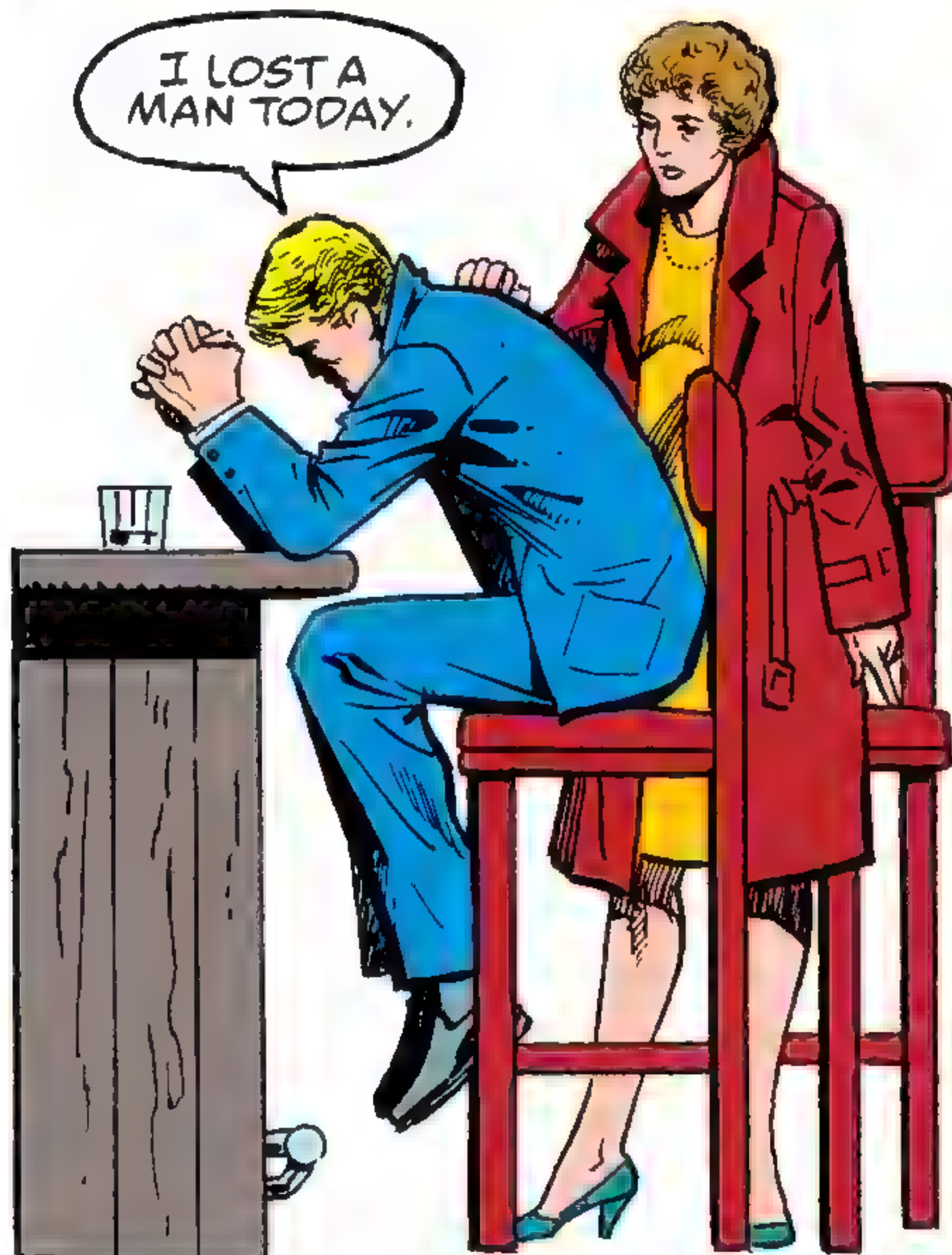
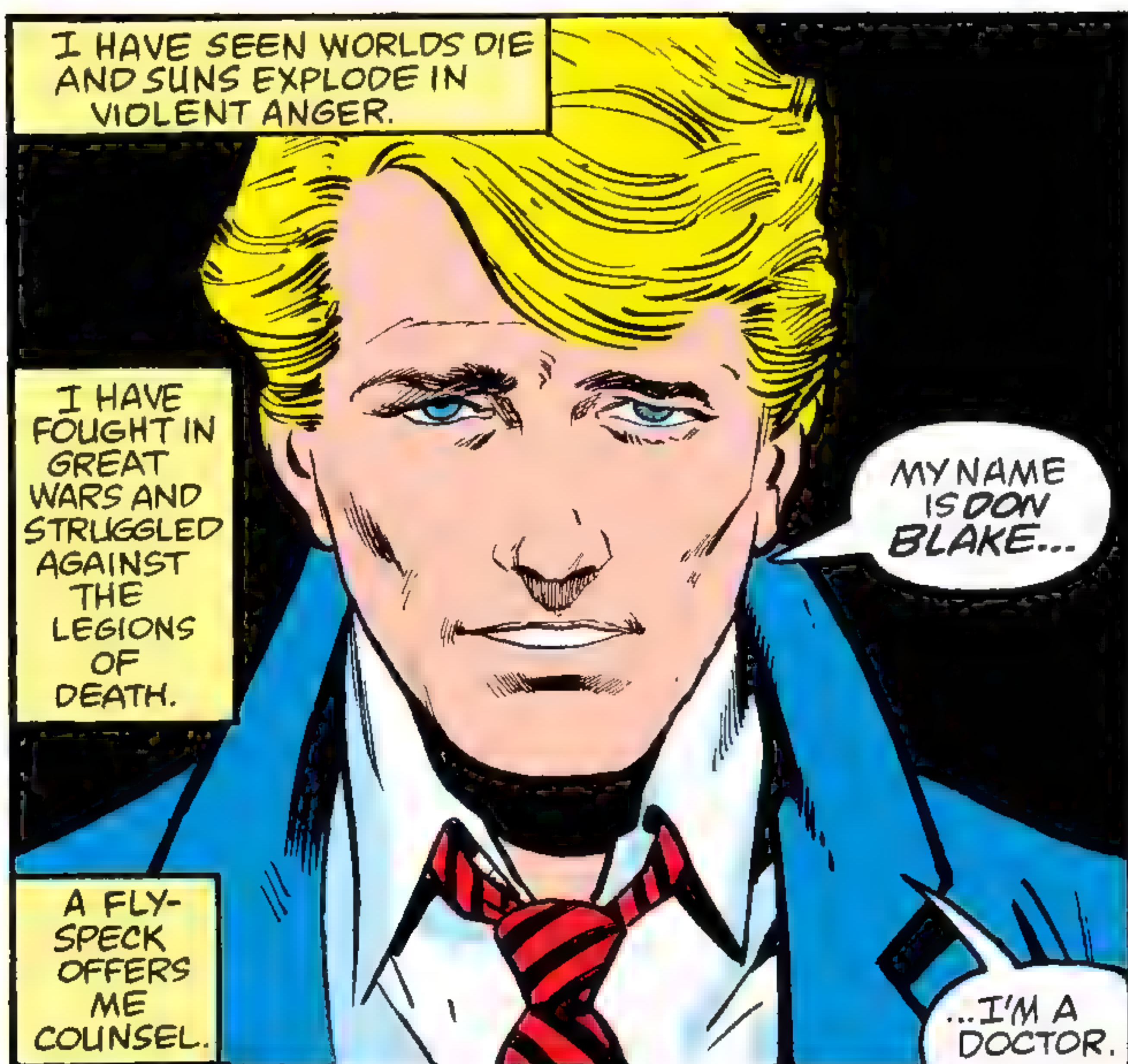
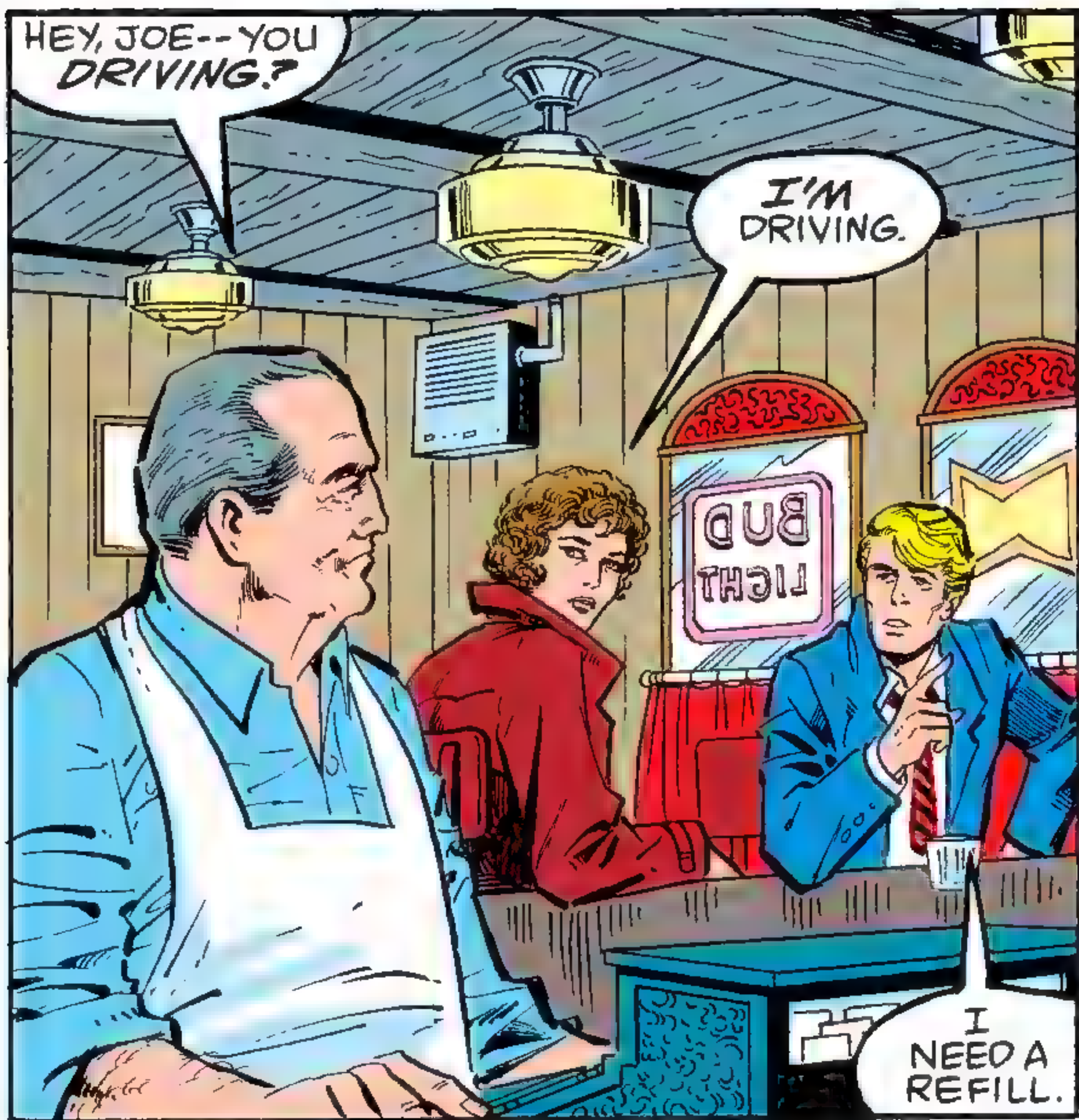
I LANGUISH IN ANGER AND GRIEF, I SEEK CONSOLATION FROM A GRIMY GLASS.

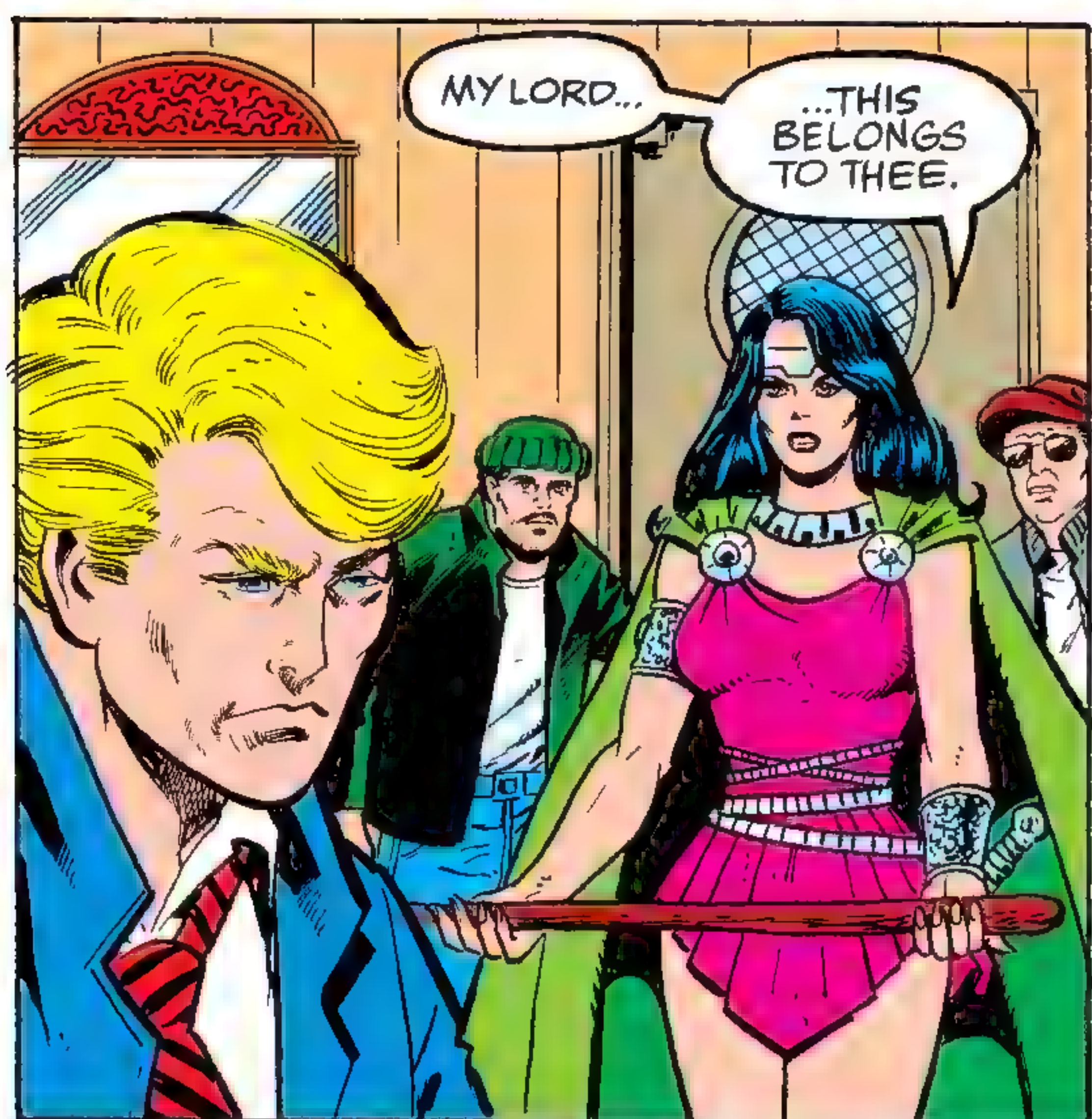
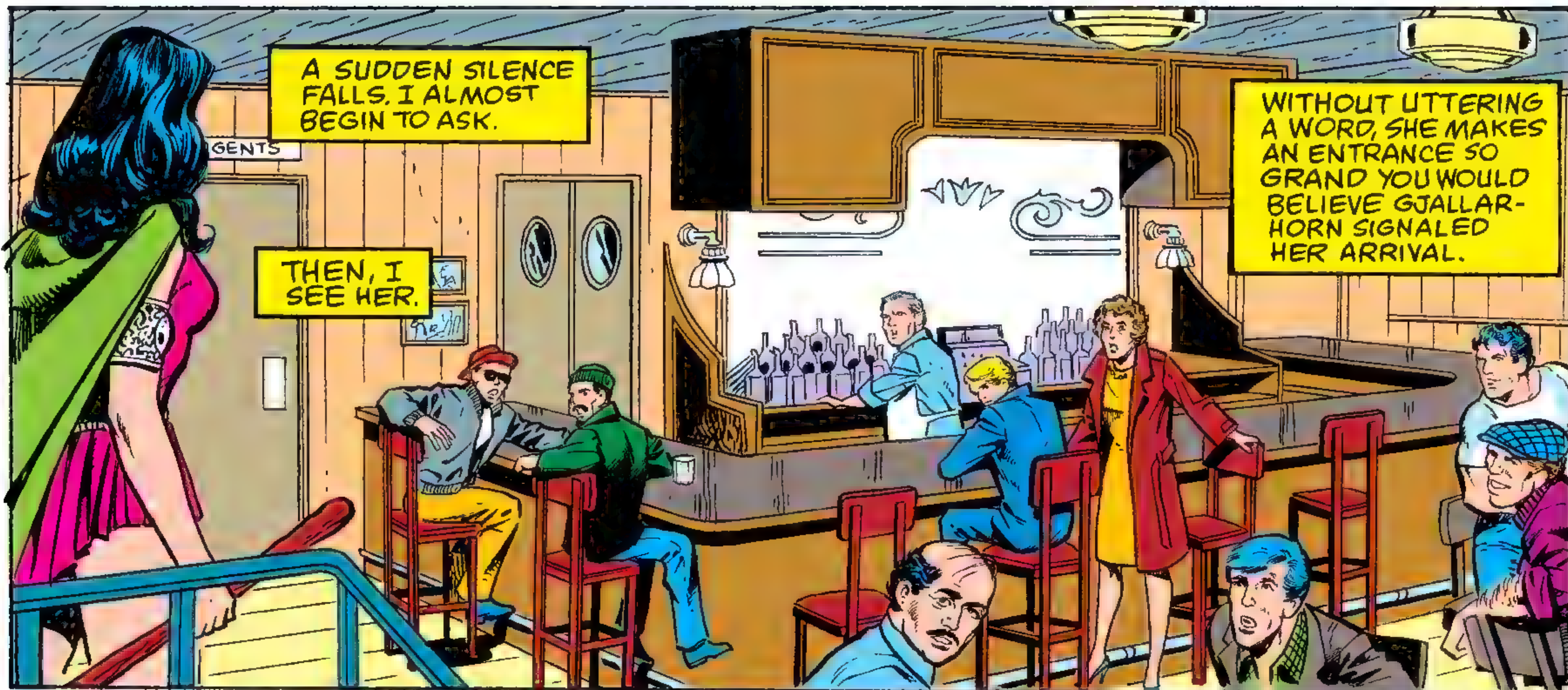
I SHATTER MY SOUL.

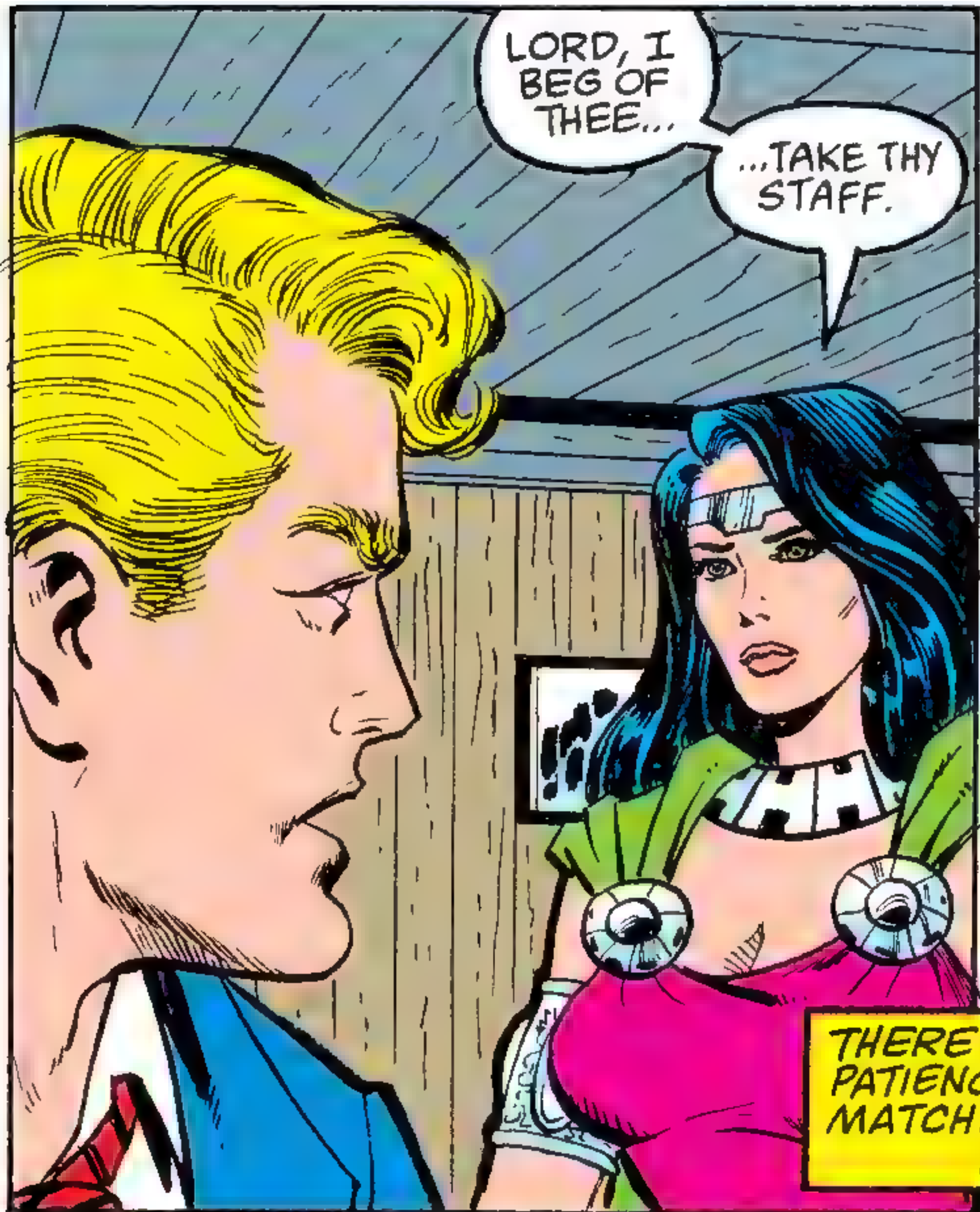
NONE OF MY BUSINESS, JOE...

... BUT DON'T YOU THINK YOU OUGHTTA SLOW DOWN--?





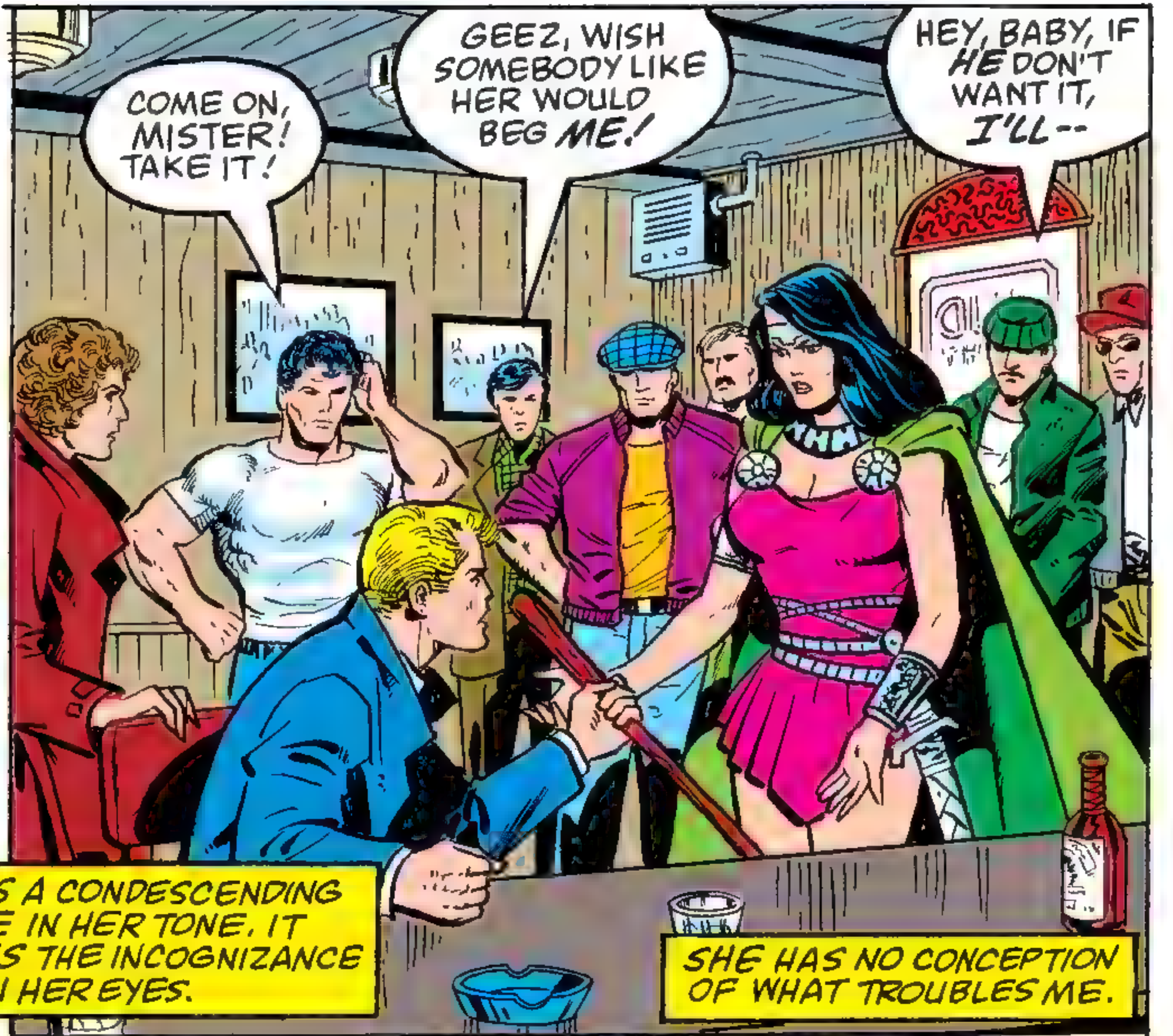




LORD, I
BEG OF
THEE...

...TAKE THY
STAFF.

THERE IS A CONDESCENDING
PATIENCE IN HER TONE. IT
MATCHES THE INCOGNIZANCE
IN HER EYES.

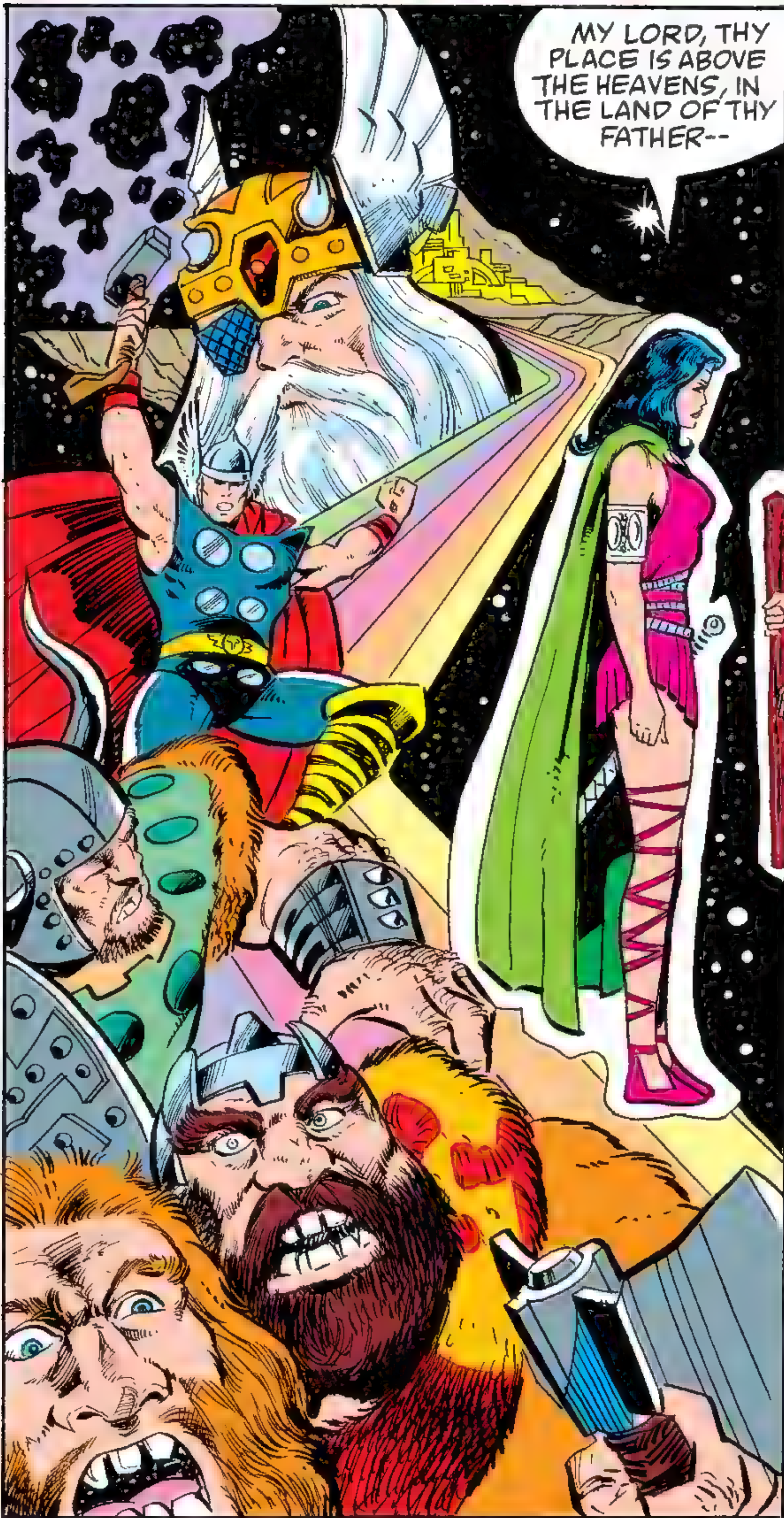


COME ON,
MISTER!
TAKE IT!

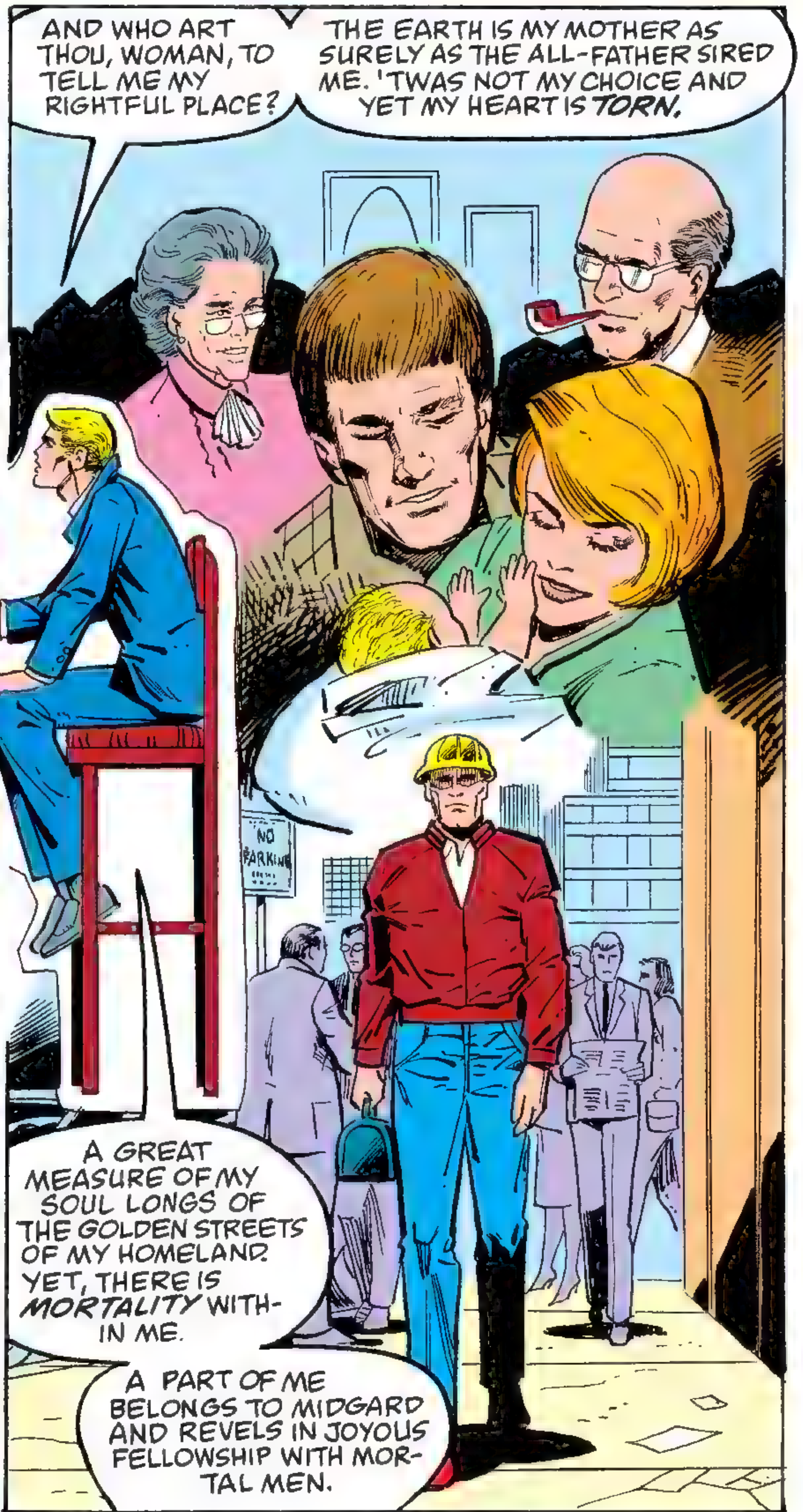
GEEZ, WISH
SOMEBODY LIKE
HER WOULD
BEG ME!

HEY, BABY, IF
HE DON'T
WANT IT,
I'LL--

SHE HAS NO CONCEPTION
OF WHAT TROUBLES ME.



MY LORD, THY
PLACE IS ABOVE
THE HEAVENS, IN
THE LAND OF THY
FATHER--

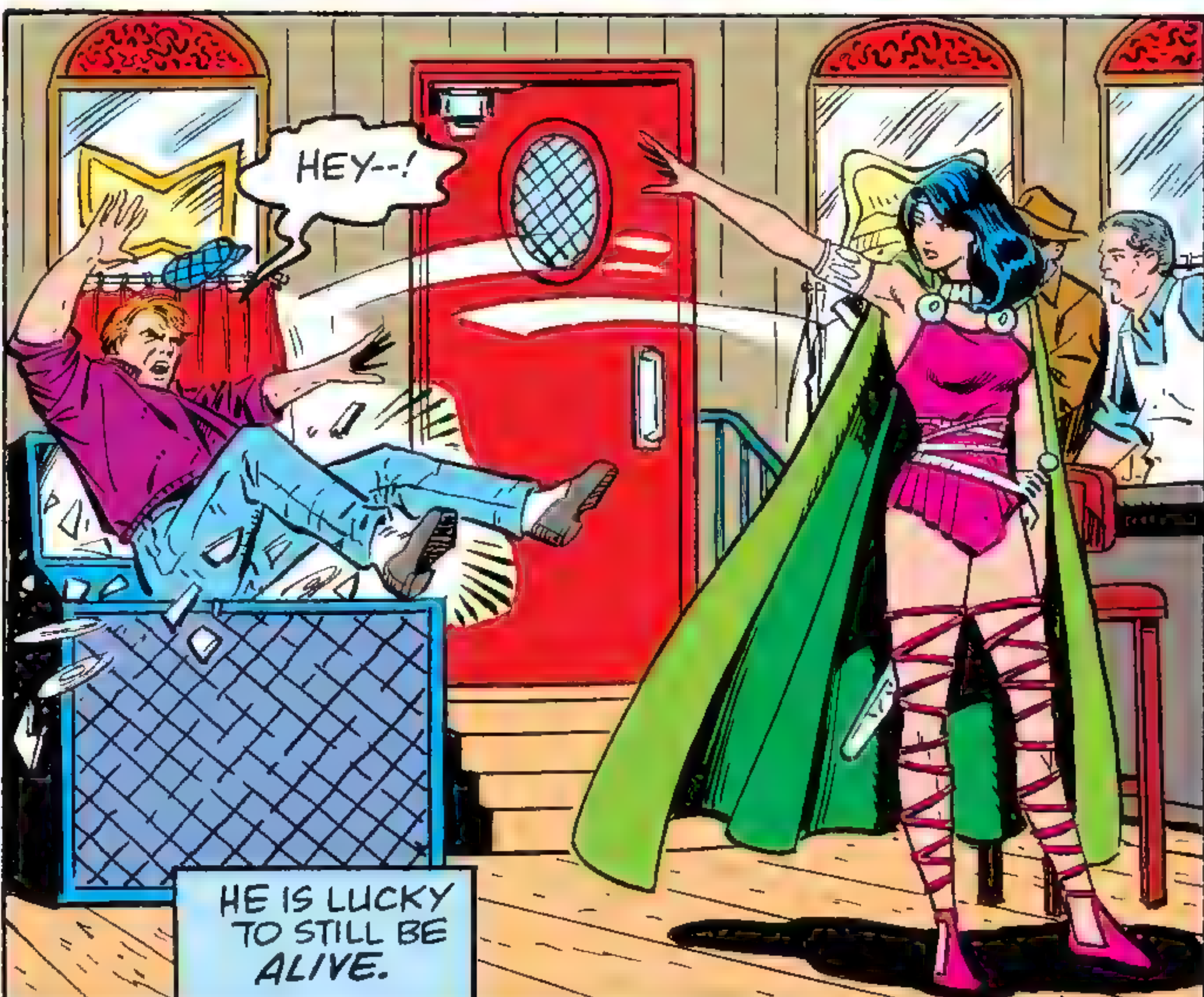
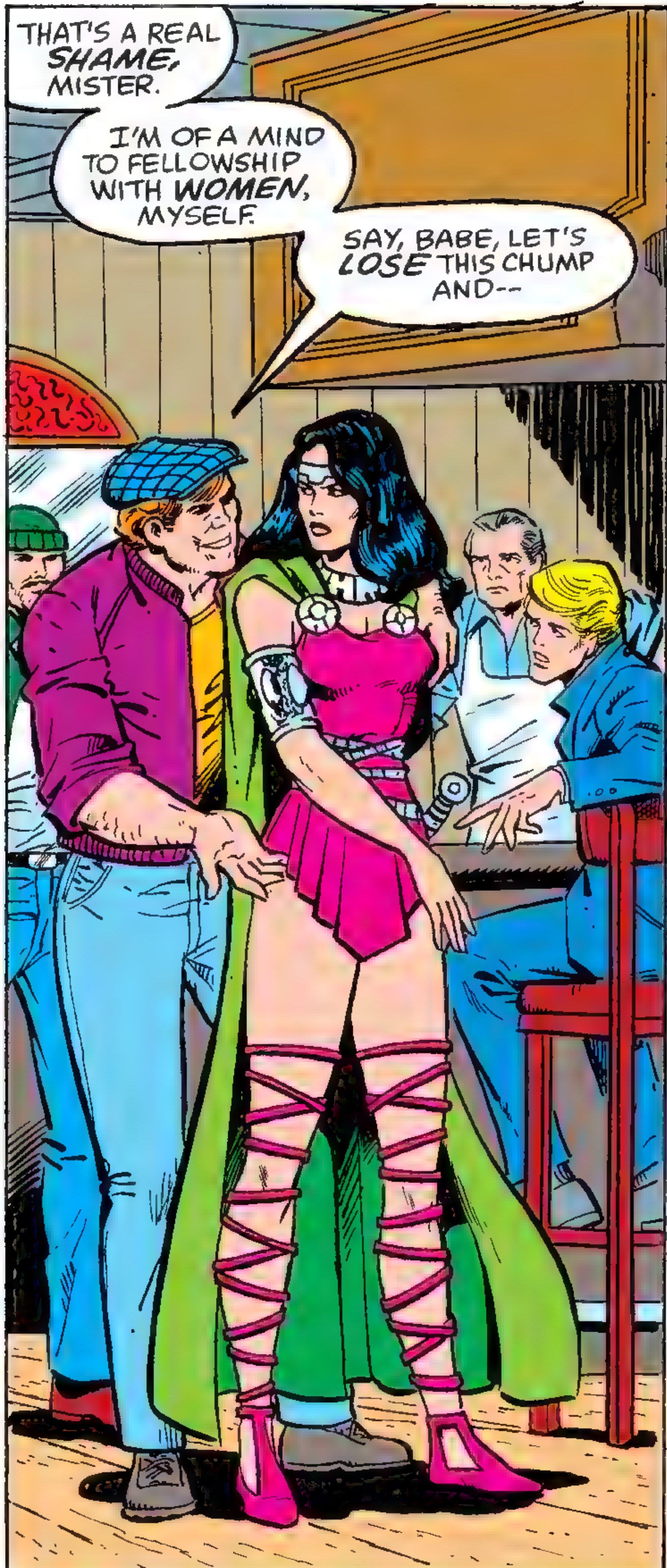


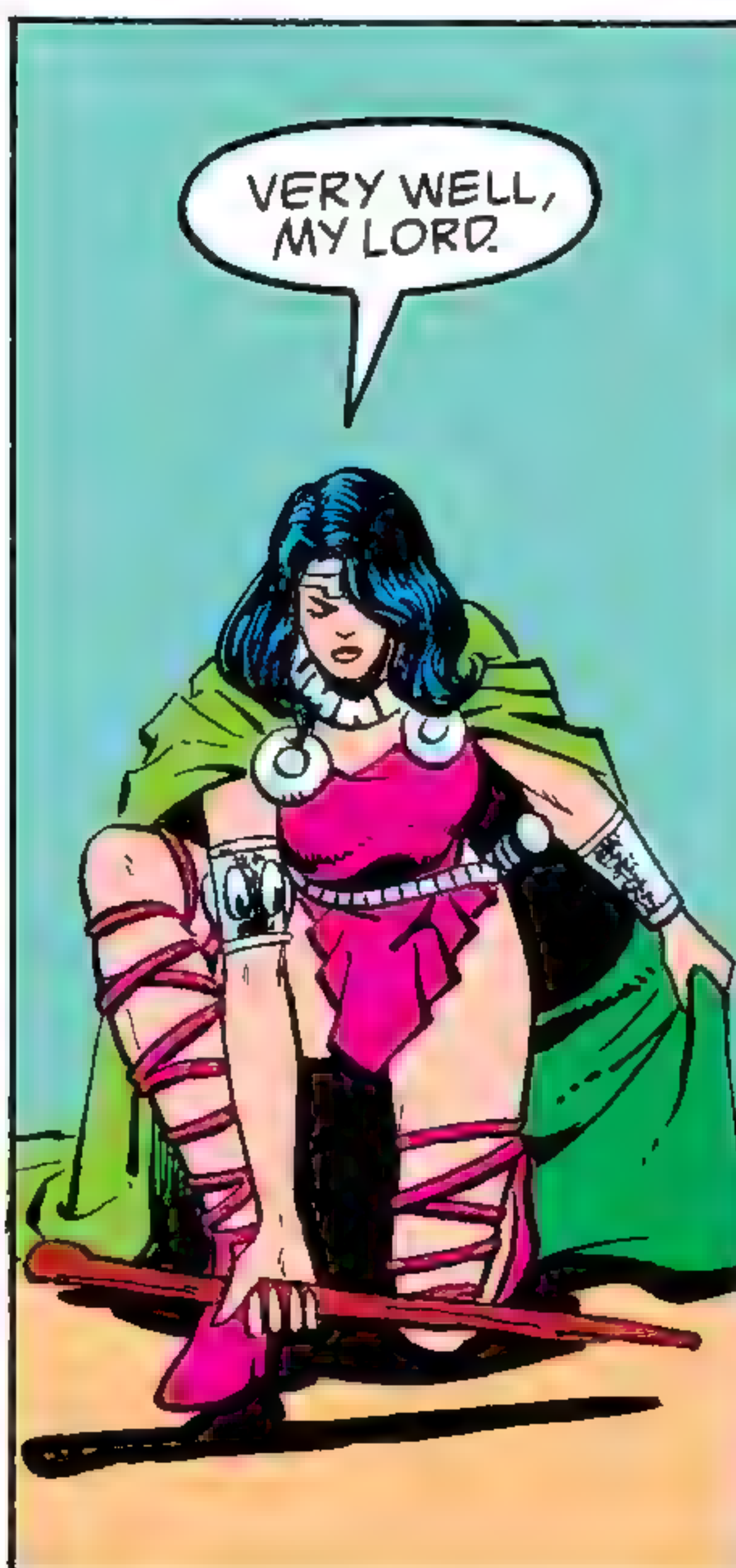
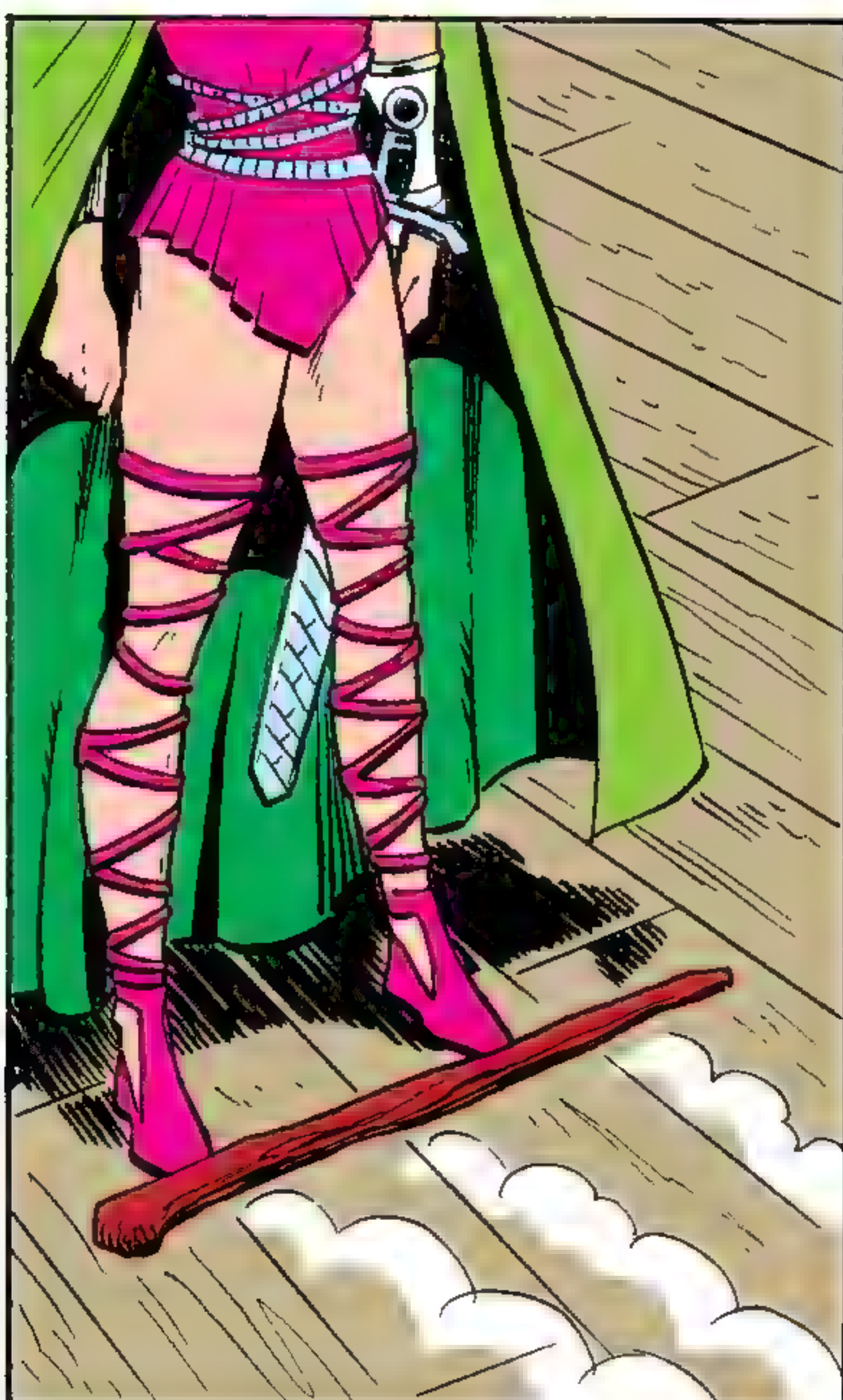
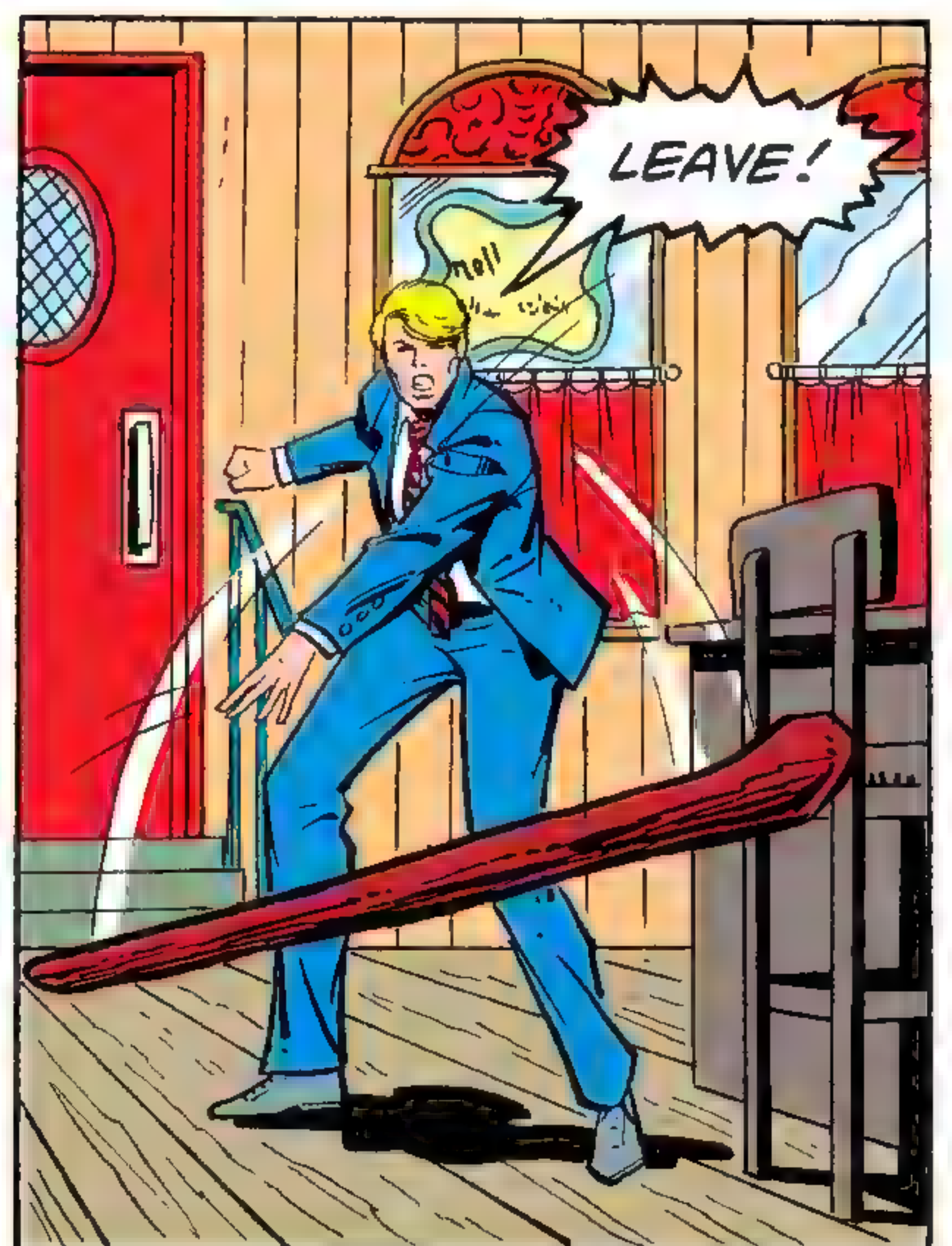
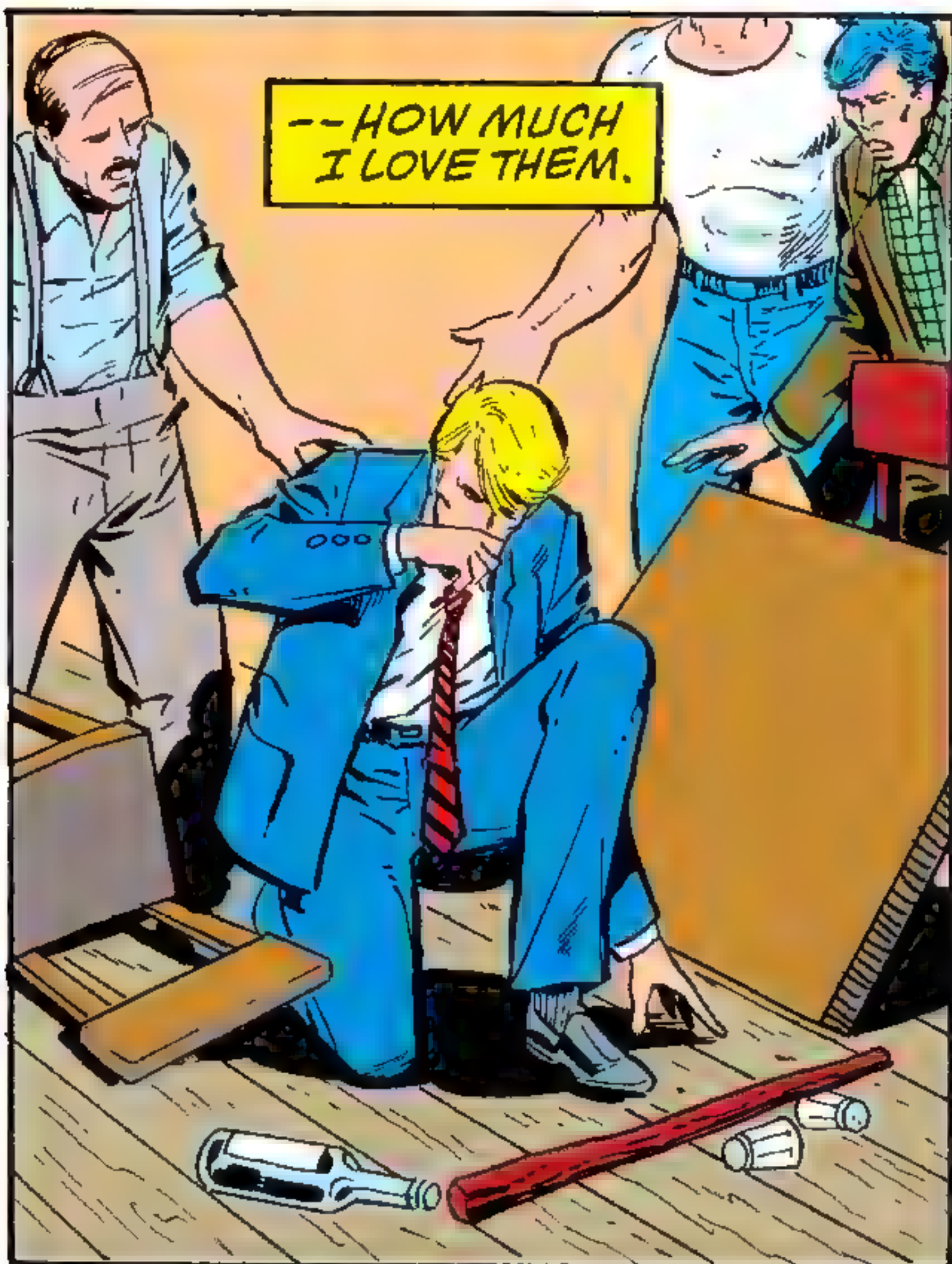
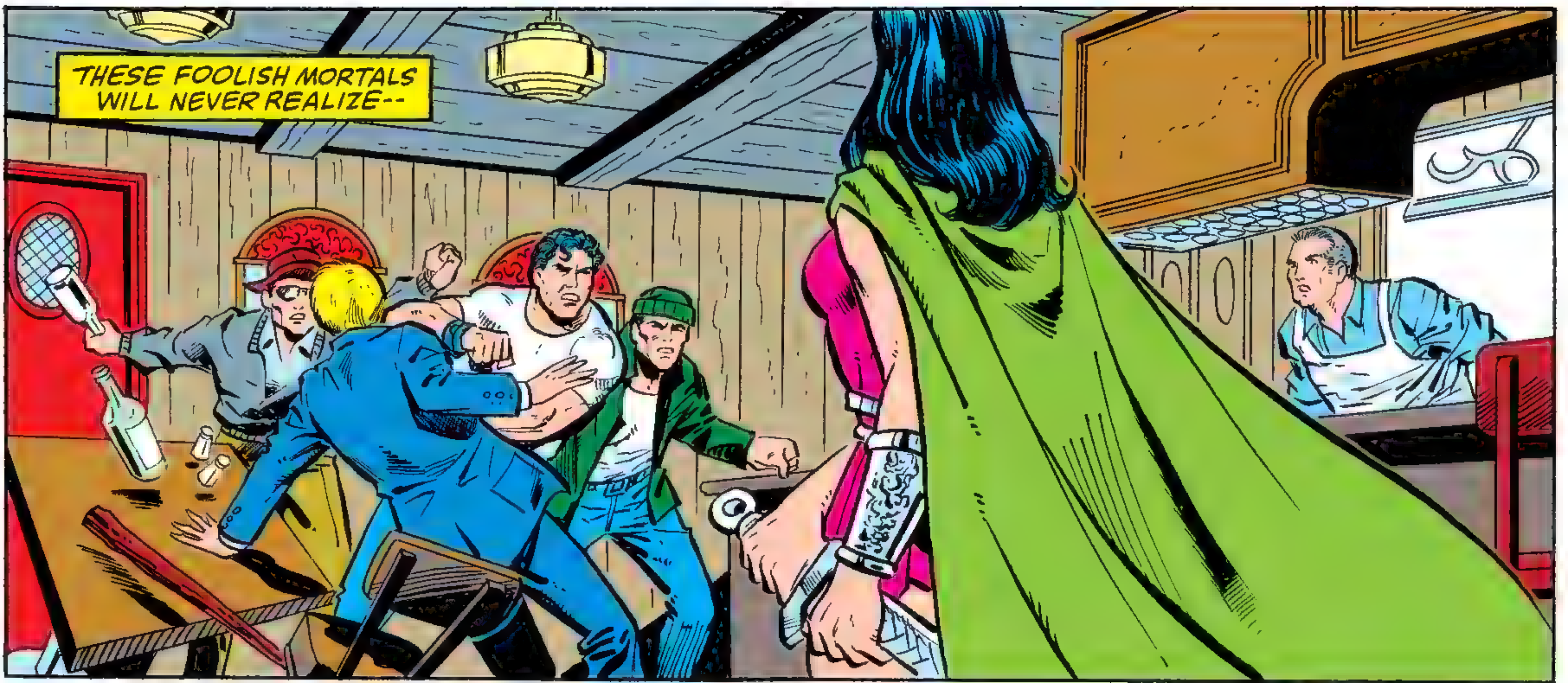
AND WHO ART
THOU, WOMAN, TO
TELL ME MY
RIGHTFUL PLACE?

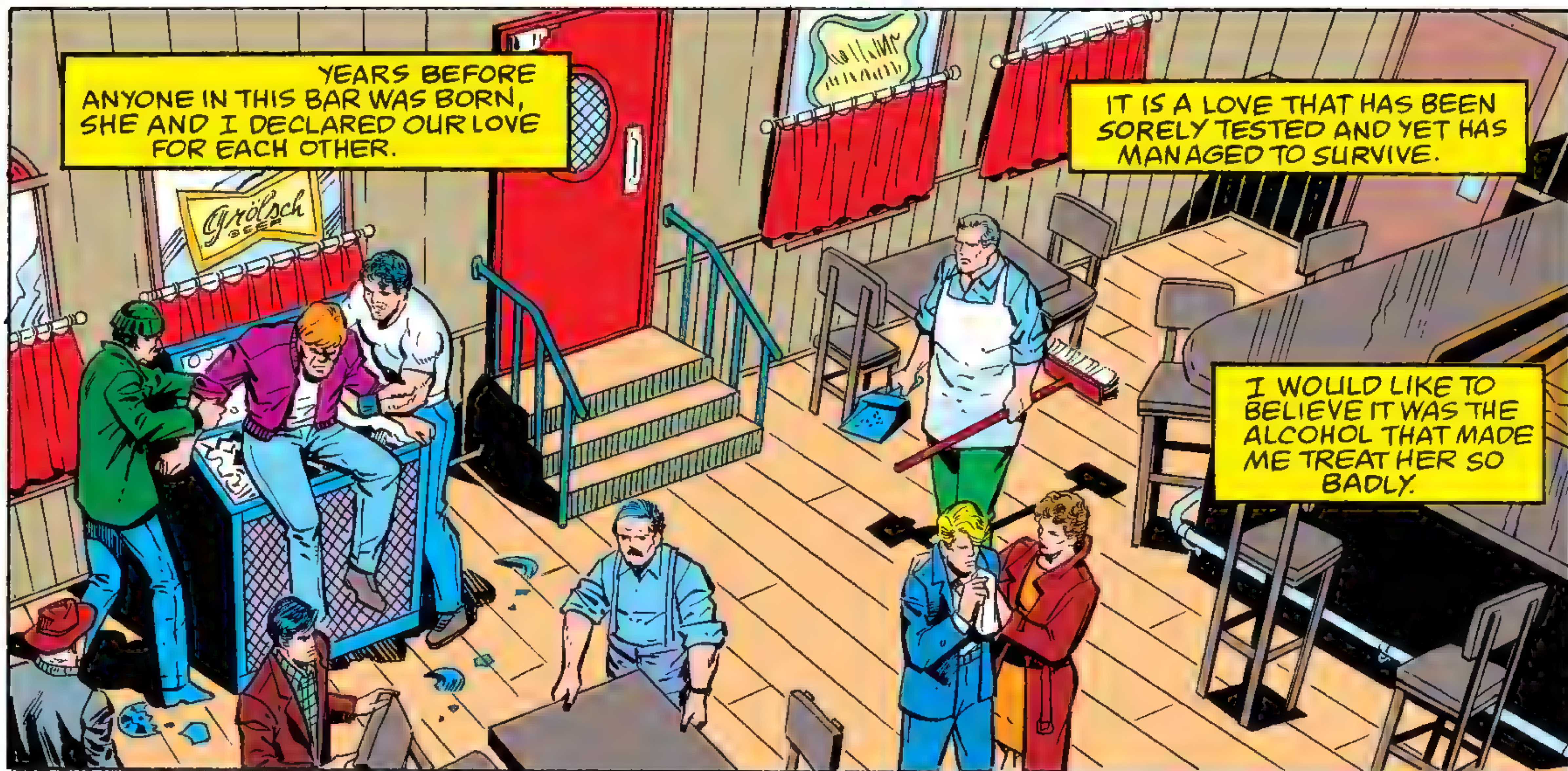
THE EARTH IS MY MOTHER AS
SURELY AS THE ALL-FATHER Sired
ME. 'T WAS NOT MY CHOICE AND
YET MY HEART IS **TORN**.

A GREAT
MEASURE OF MY
SOUL LONGS OF
THE GOLDEN STREETS
OF MY HOMELAND.
YET, THERE IS
MORTALITY WITH-
IN ME.

A PART OF ME
BELONGS TO MIDGARD
AND REVELS IN JOYOUS
FELLOWSHIP WITH MOR-
TAL MEN.







YEARS BEFORE ANYONE IN THIS BAR WAS BORN, SHE AND I DECLARED OUR LOVE FOR EACH OTHER.

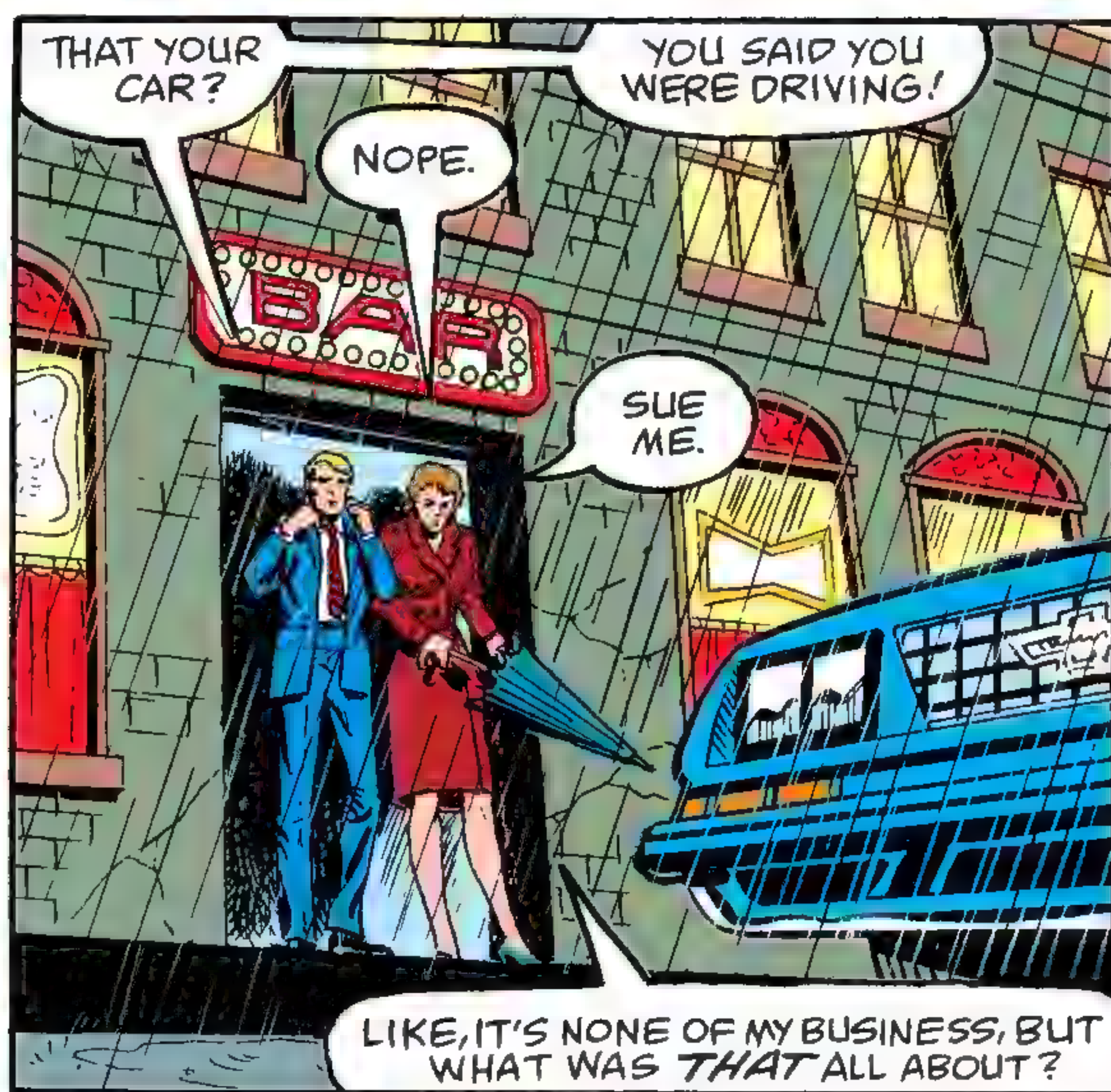
IT IS A LOVE THAT HAS BEEN SORELY TESTED AND YET HAS MANAGED TO SURVIVE.

I WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE IT WAS THE ALCOHOL THAT MADE ME TREAT HER SO BADLY.



MAYBE YOU SHOULD LEAVE.

I AGREE.



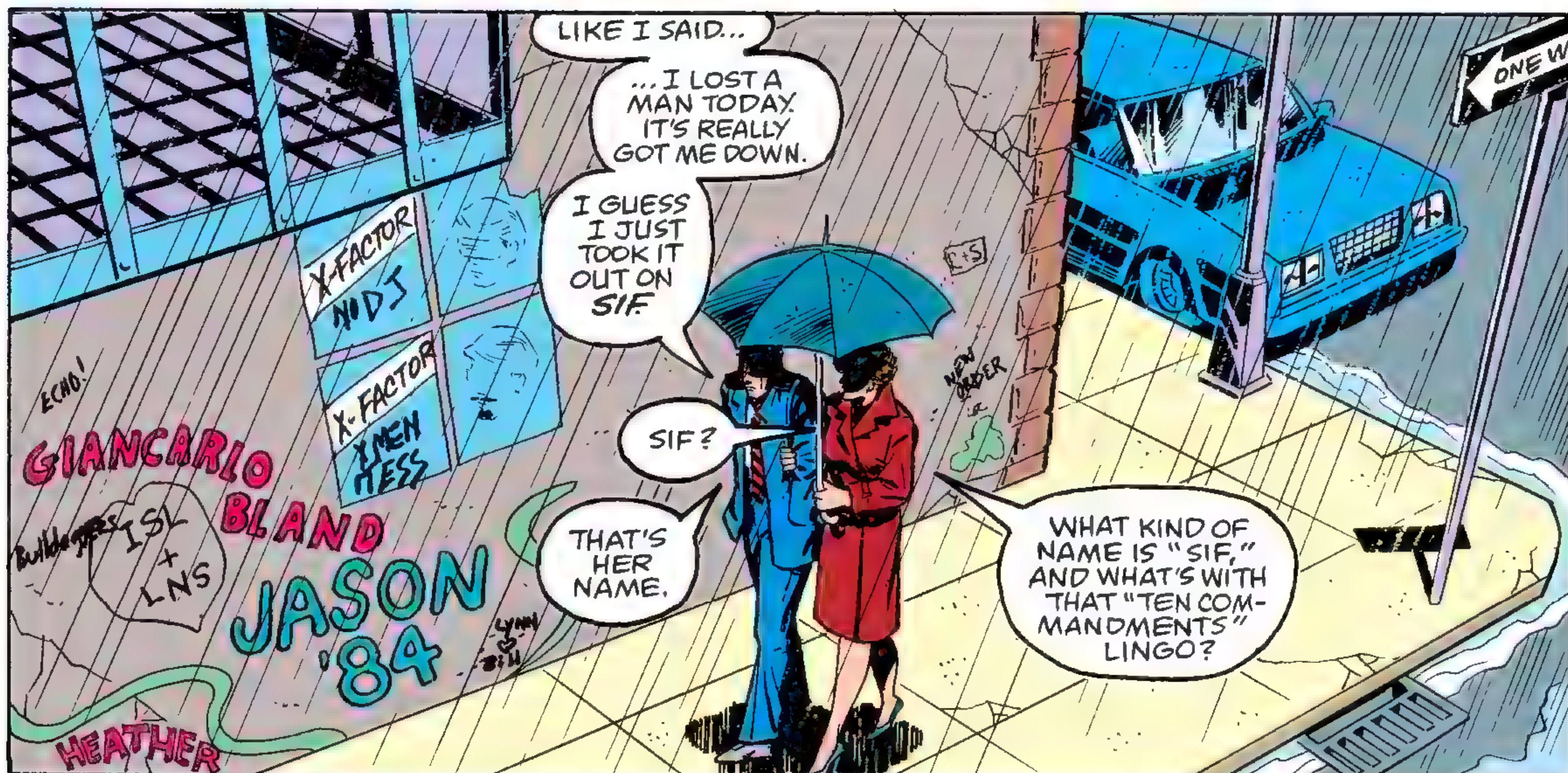
THAT YOUR CAR?

YOU SAID YOU WERE DRIVING!

NOPE.

SUE ME.

LIKE, IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS, BUT WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?



LIKE I SAID...

...I LOST A MAN TODAY. IT'S REALLY GOT ME DOWN.

I GUESS I JUST TOOK IT OUT ON SIF.

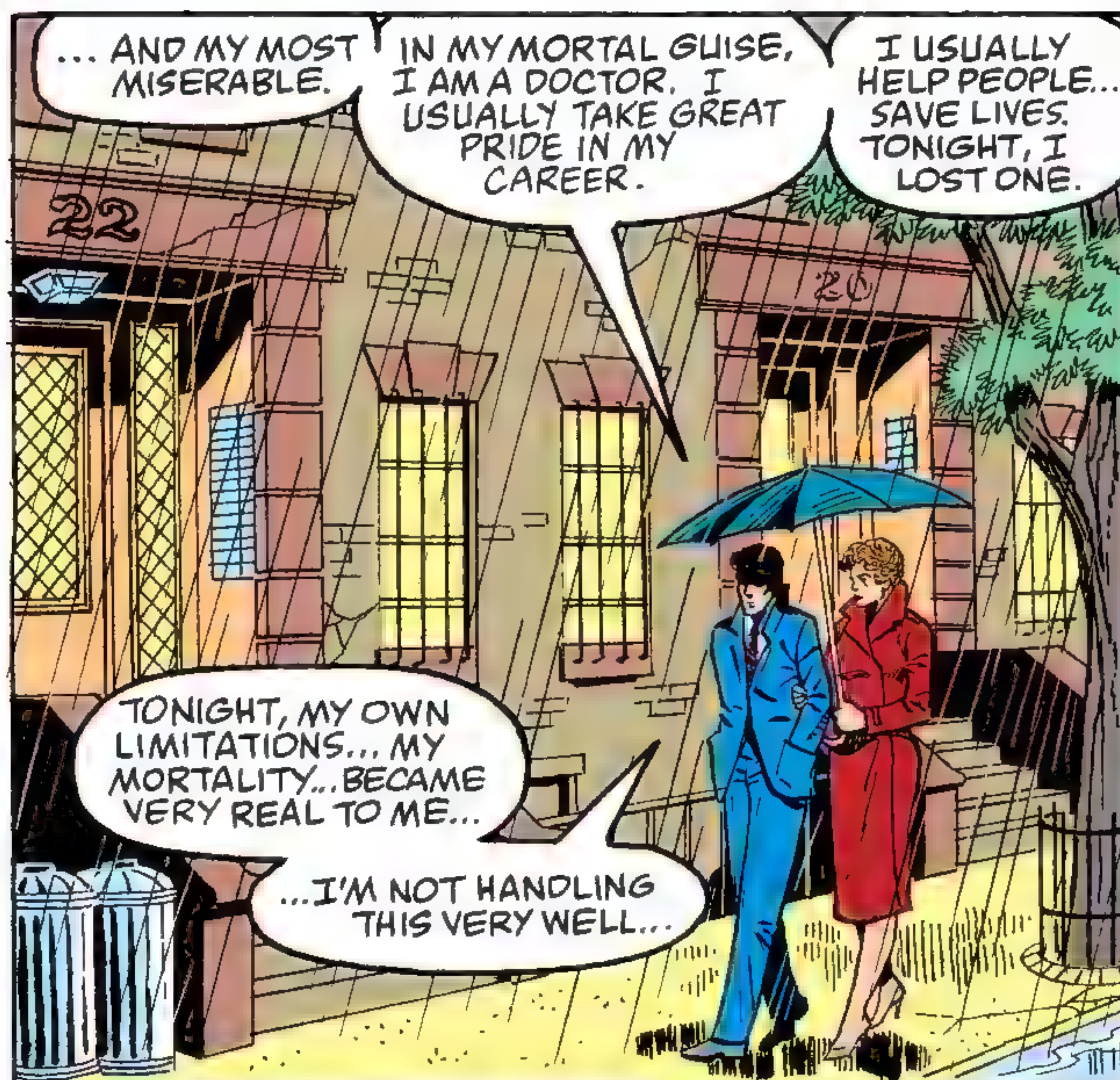
SIF?

THAT'S HER NAME.

WHAT KIND OF NAME IS "SIF," AND WHAT'S WITH THAT "TEN COMMANDMENTS" LINGO?

ECHO!
GIANCARIO BLAND
JASON '84
WEATHER
X-FACTOR
NOD
X-FACTOR
X-MEN
TESS
BULLDOGS
ISL
+
LNS
LYNN
SIF





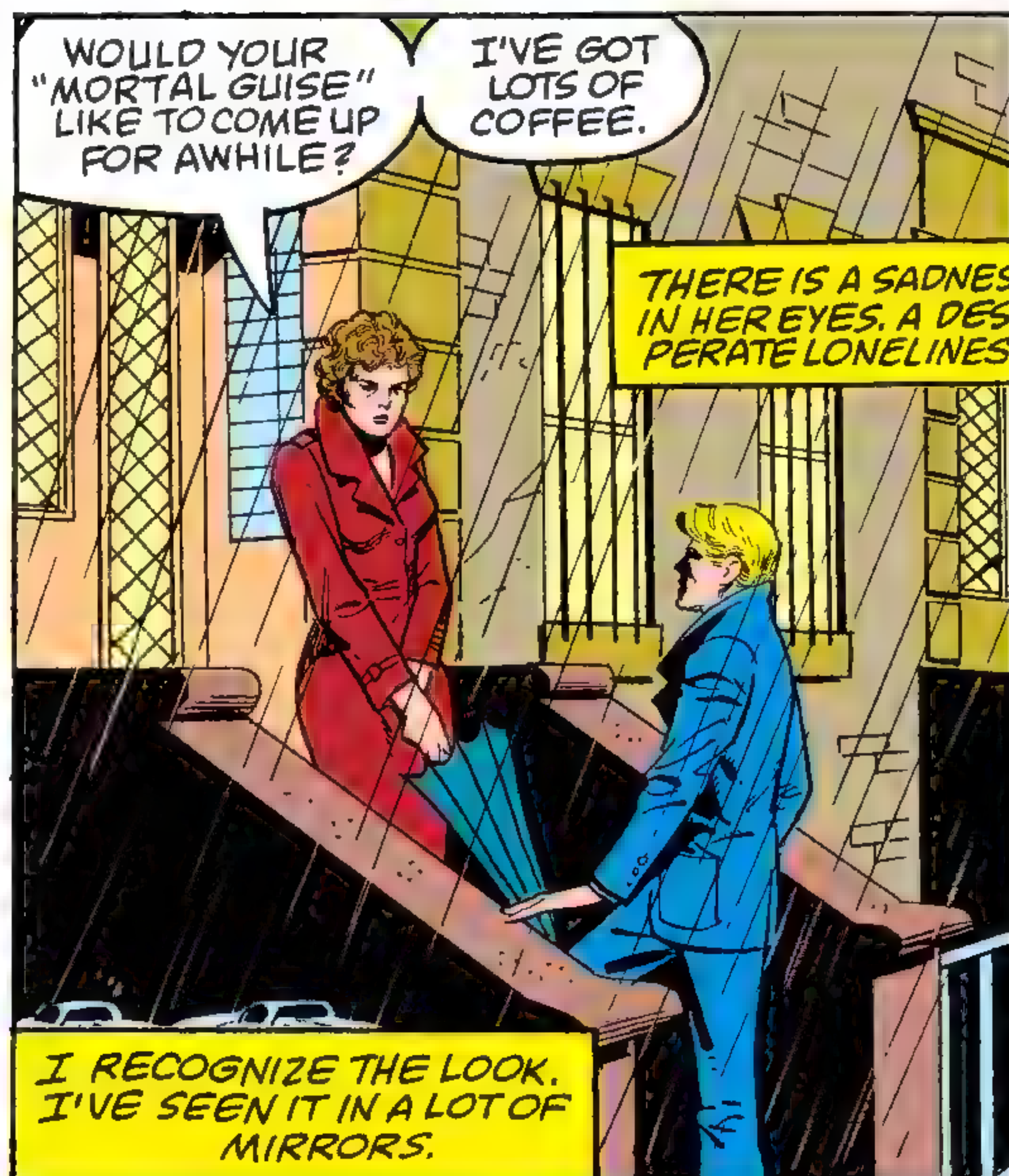
... AND MY MOST MISERABLE.

IN MY MORTAL GUISE, I AM A DOCTOR. I USUALLY TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN MY CAREER.

I USUALLY HELP PEOPLE... SAVE LIVES. TONIGHT, I LOST ONE.

TONIGHT, MY OWN LIMITATIONS... MY MORTALITY... BECAME VERY REAL TO ME...

...I'M NOT HANDLING THIS VERY WELL...



WOULD YOUR "MORTAL GUISE" LIKE TO COME UP FOR AWHILE?

I'VE GOT LOTS OF COFFEE.

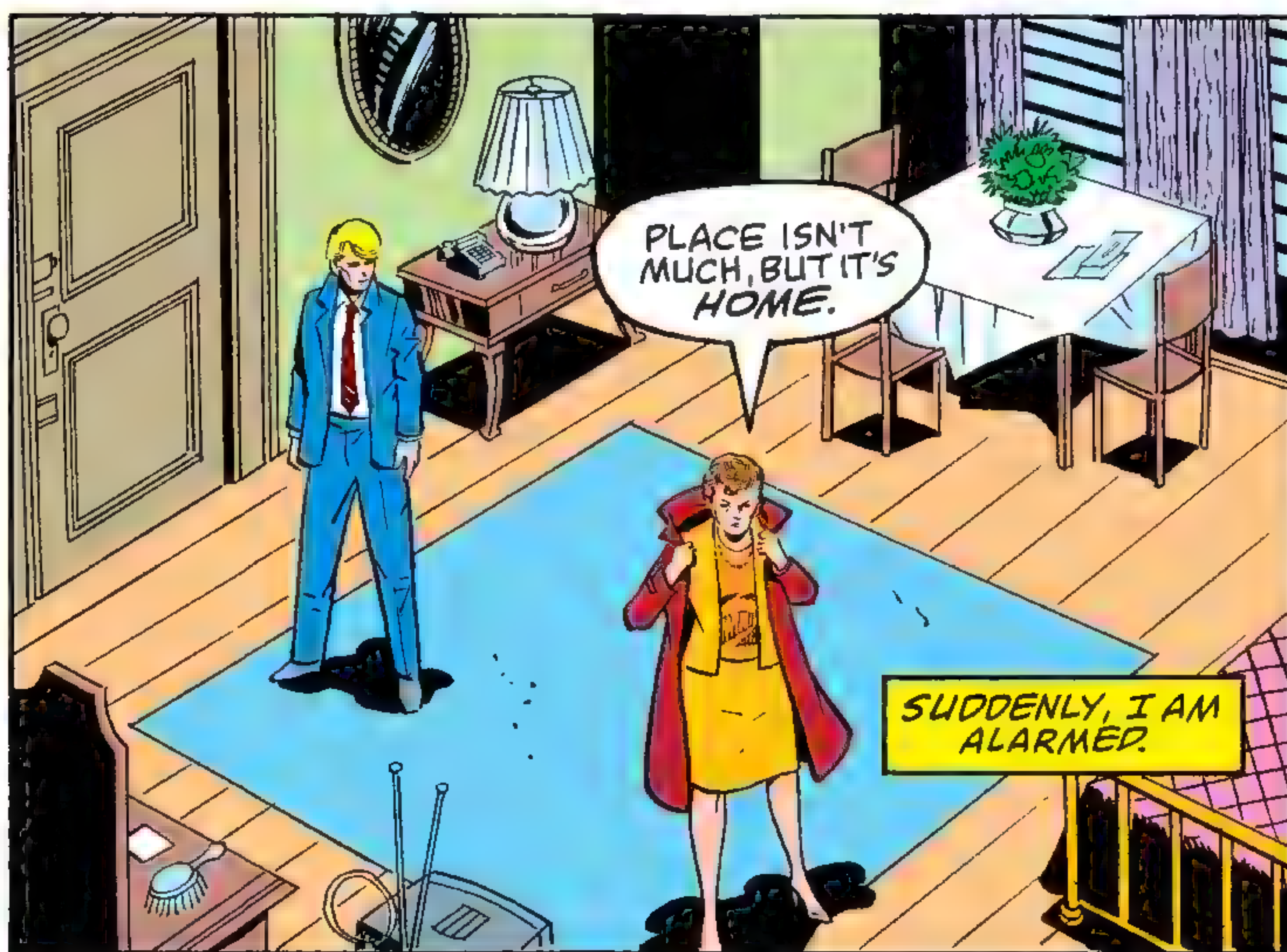
THERE IS A SADNESS IN HER EYES. A DESPERATE LONELINESS.

I RECOGNIZE THE LOOK. I'VE SEEN IT IN A LOT OF MIRRORS.



C'MON, DON. I DON'T BITE.

BUT, I KILL. WITH A SCALPEL.



PLACE ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT'S HOME.

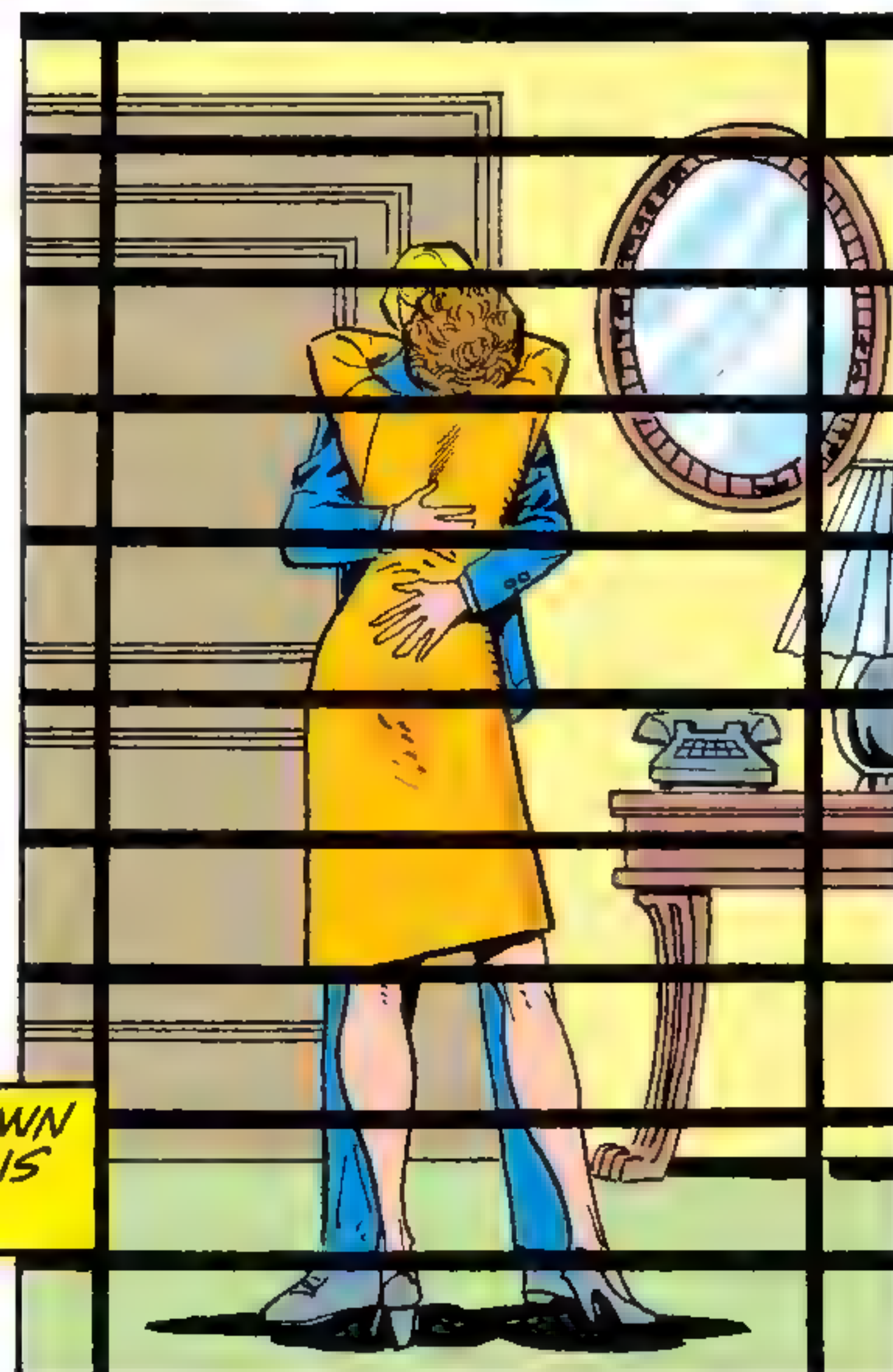
SUDDENLY, I AM ALARMED.

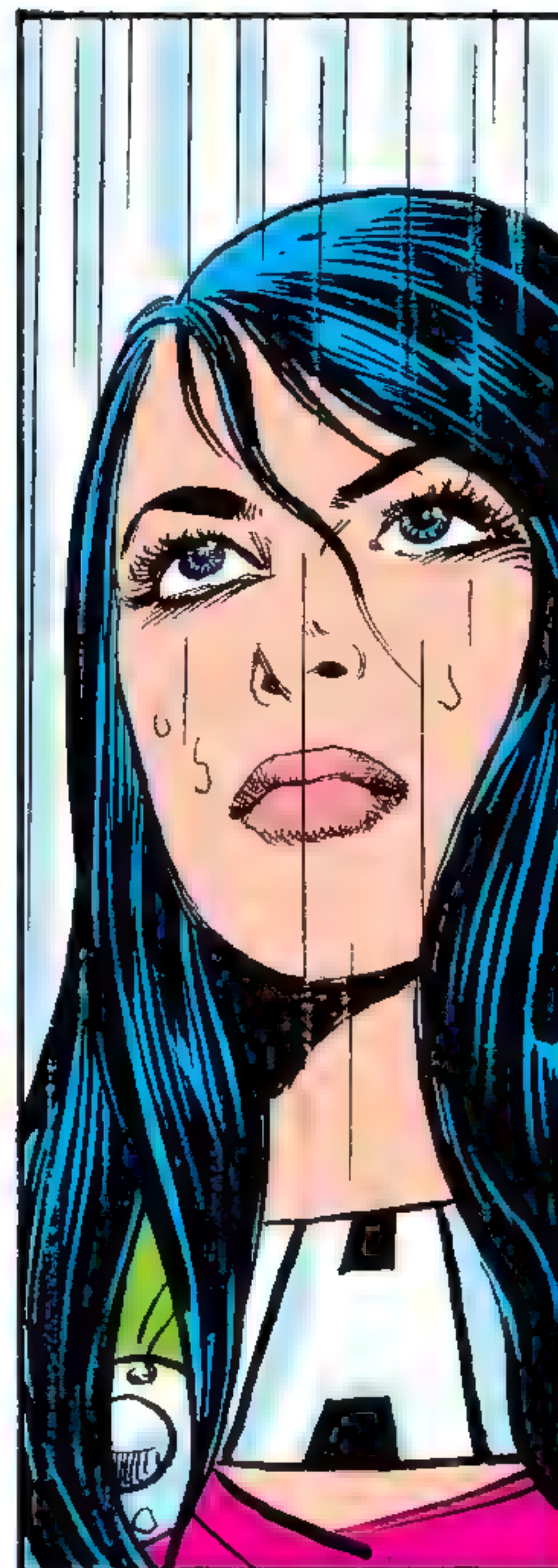
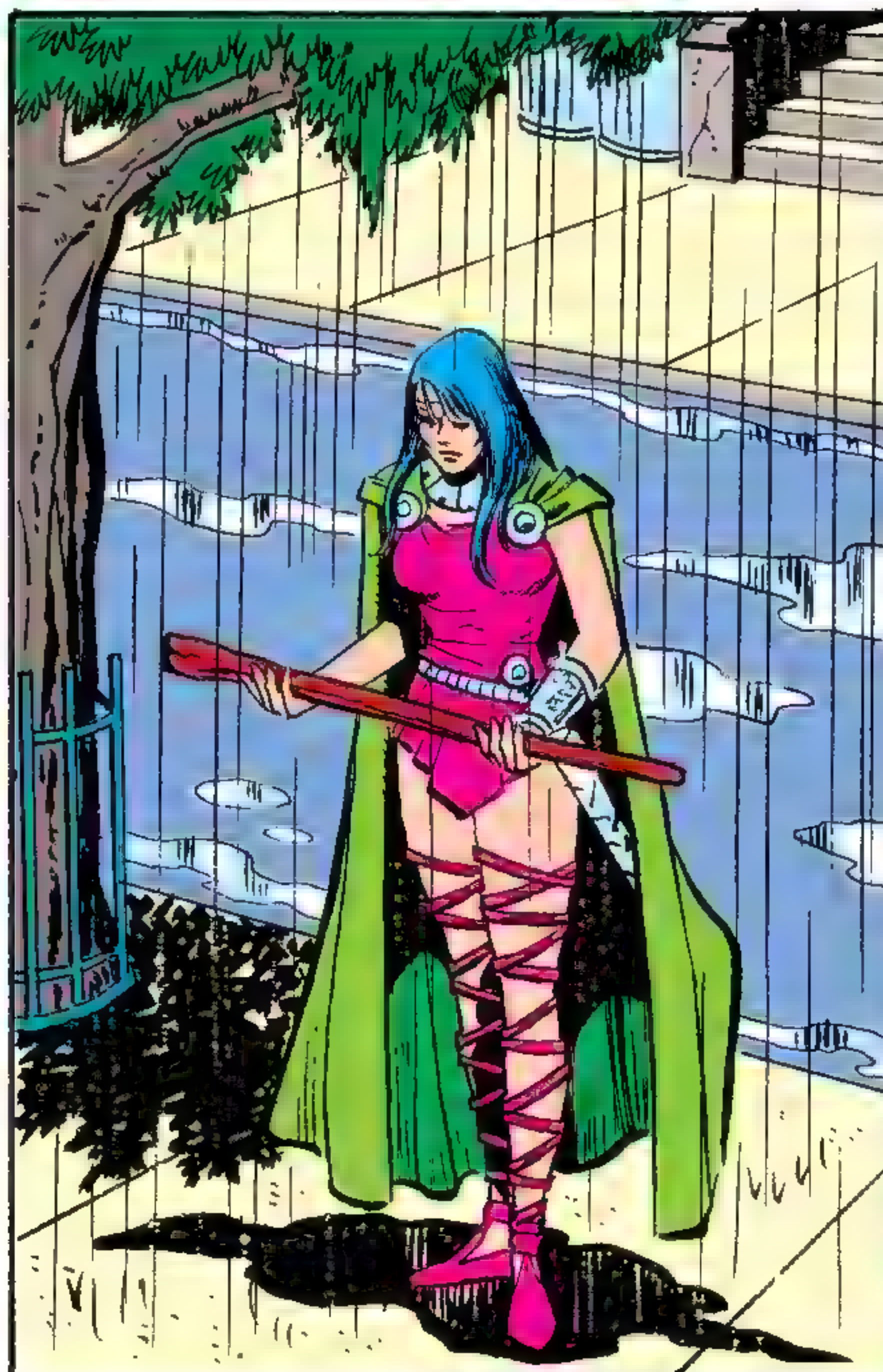
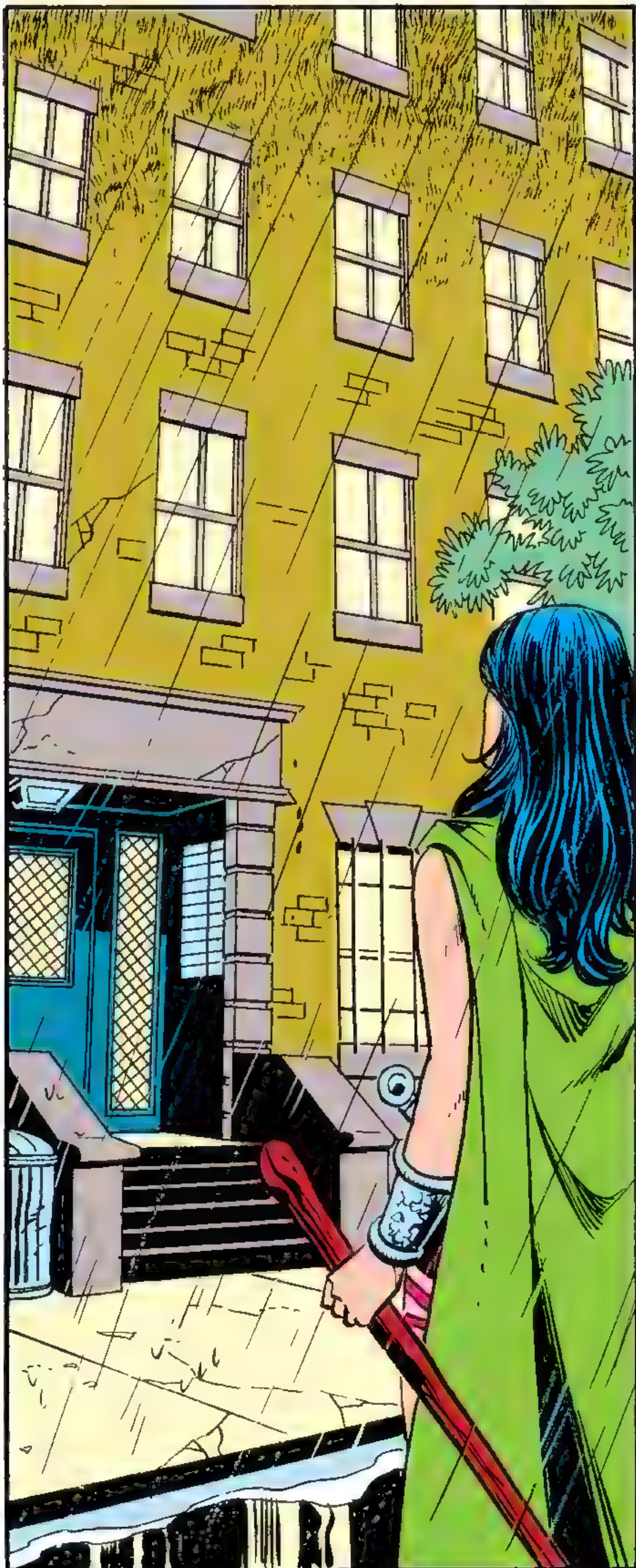
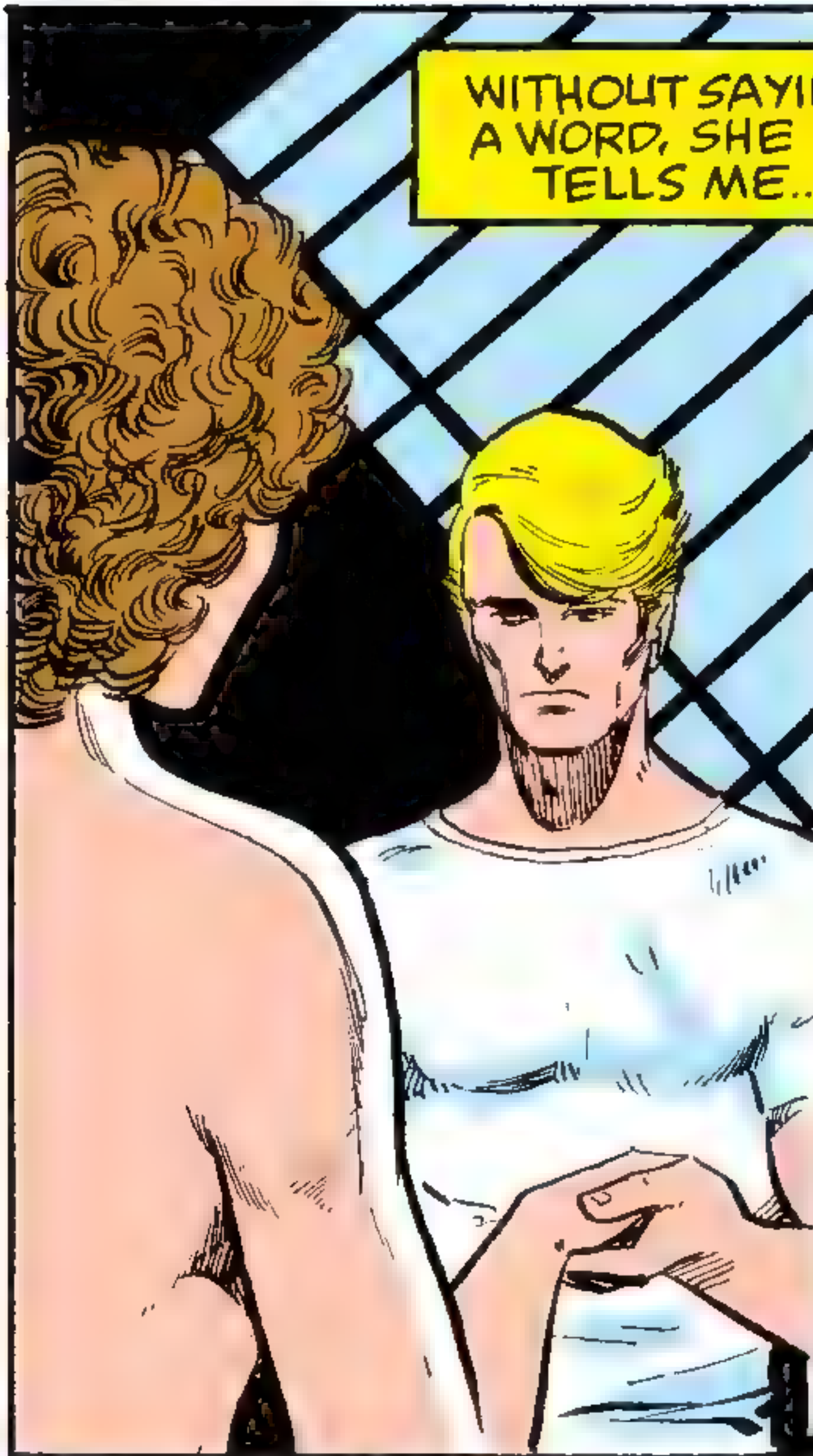
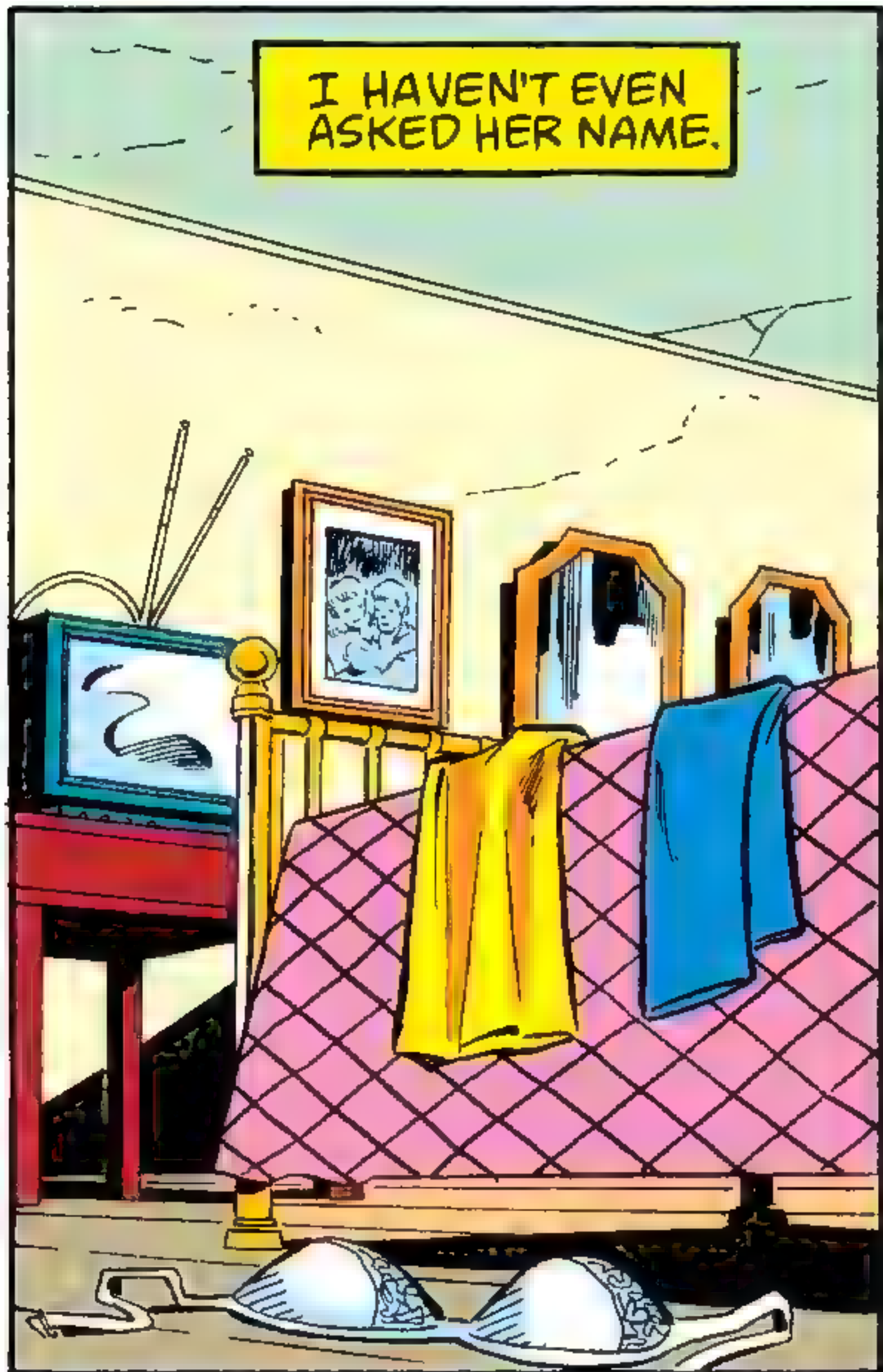


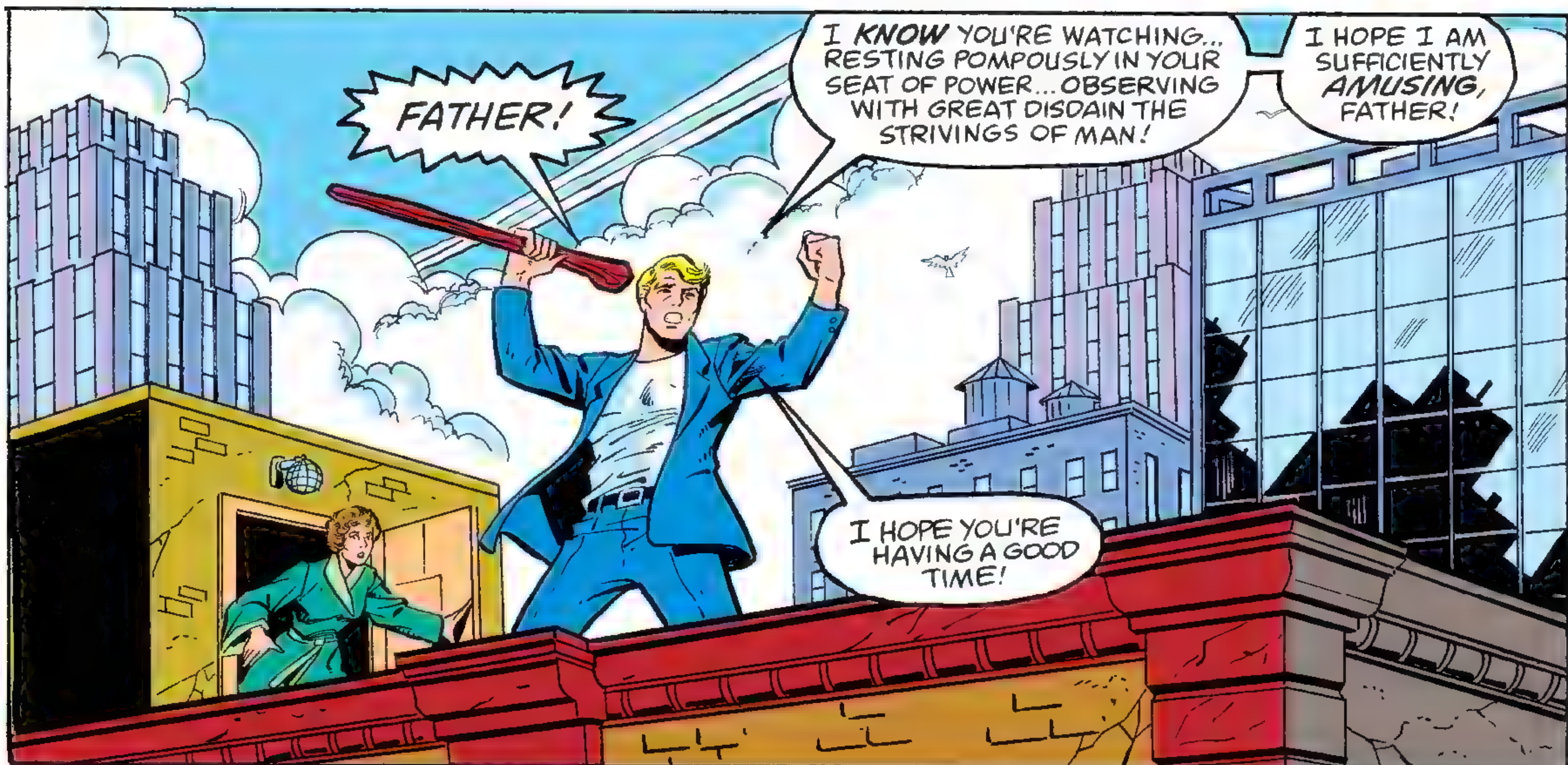
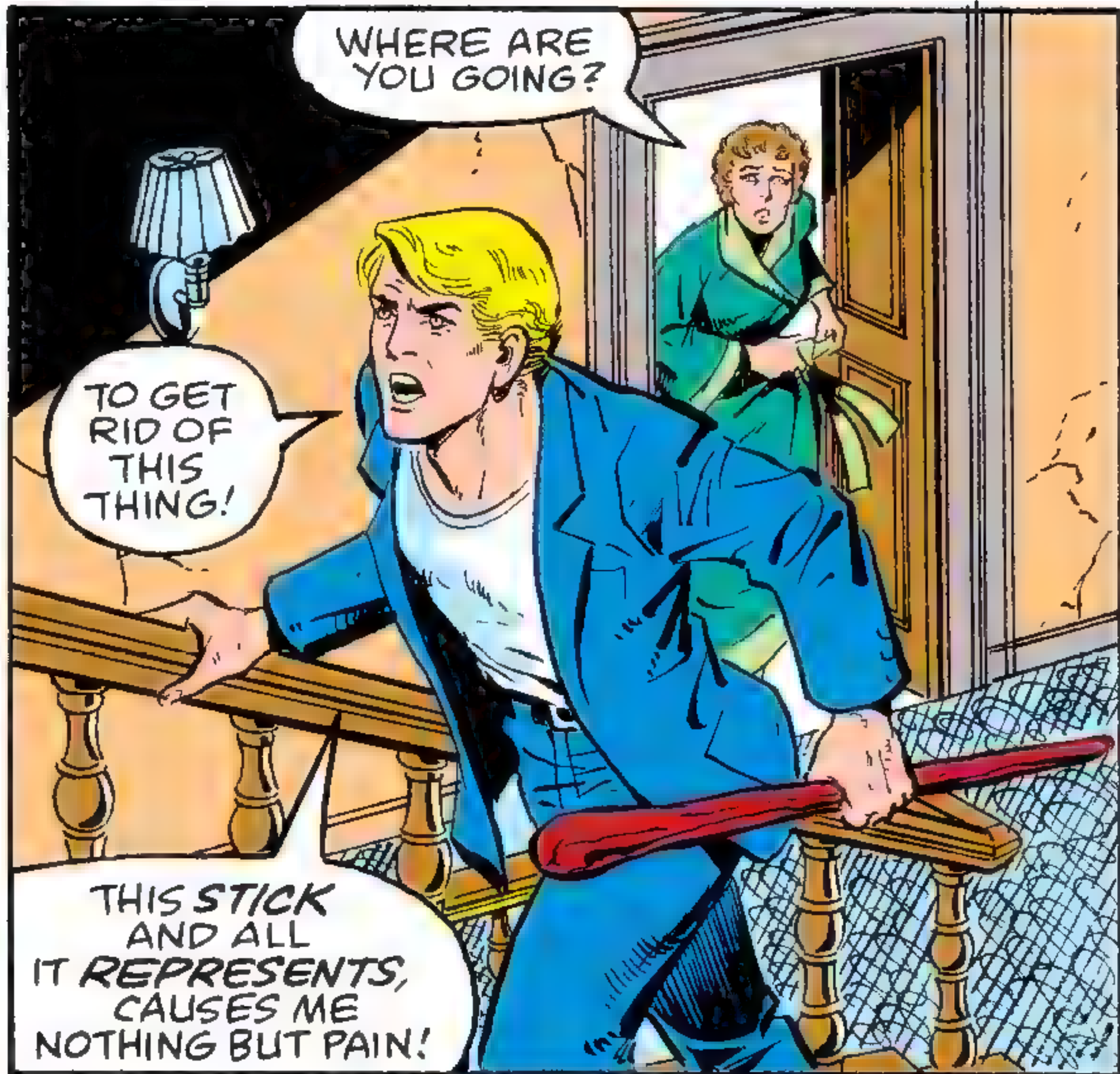
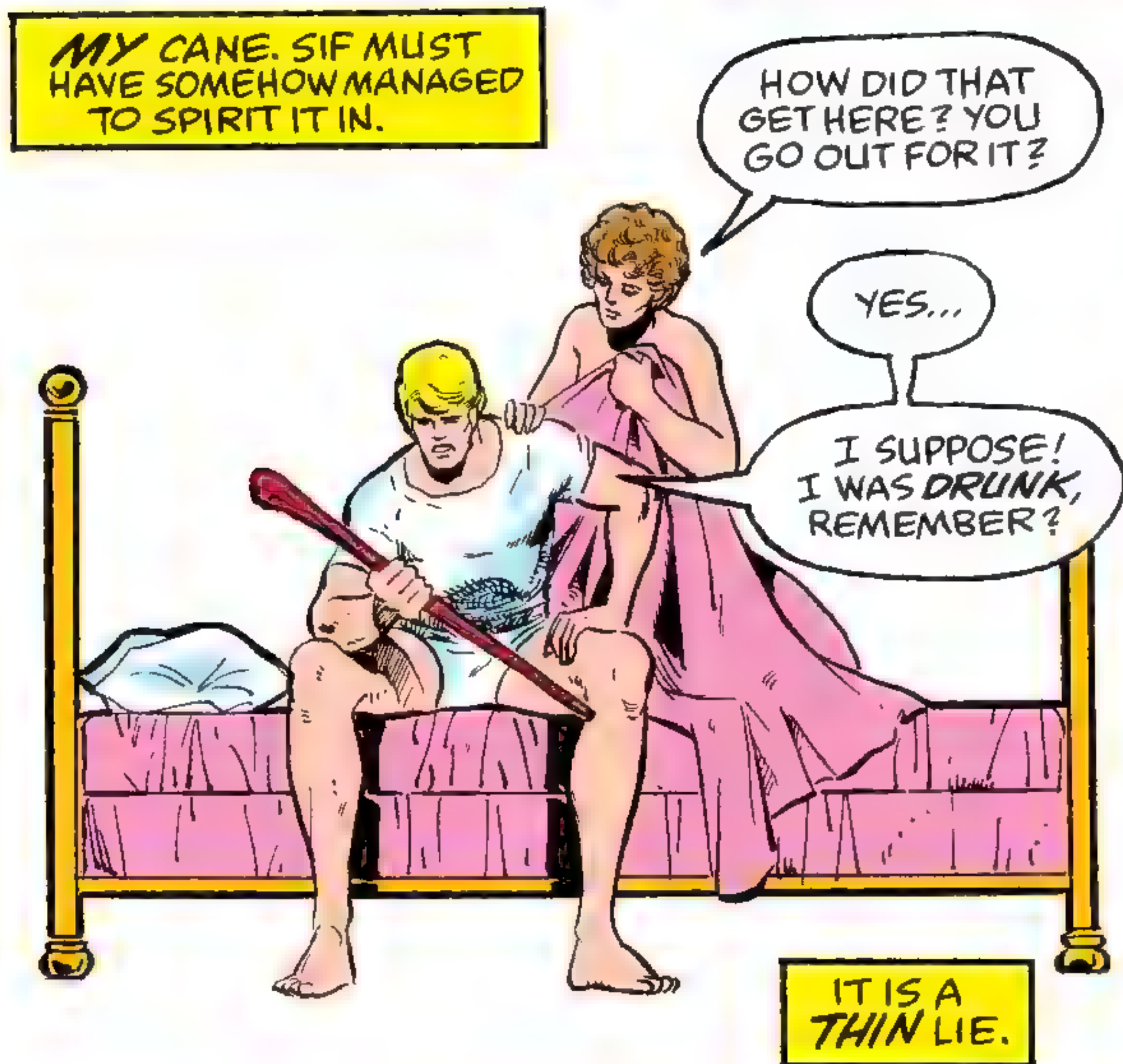
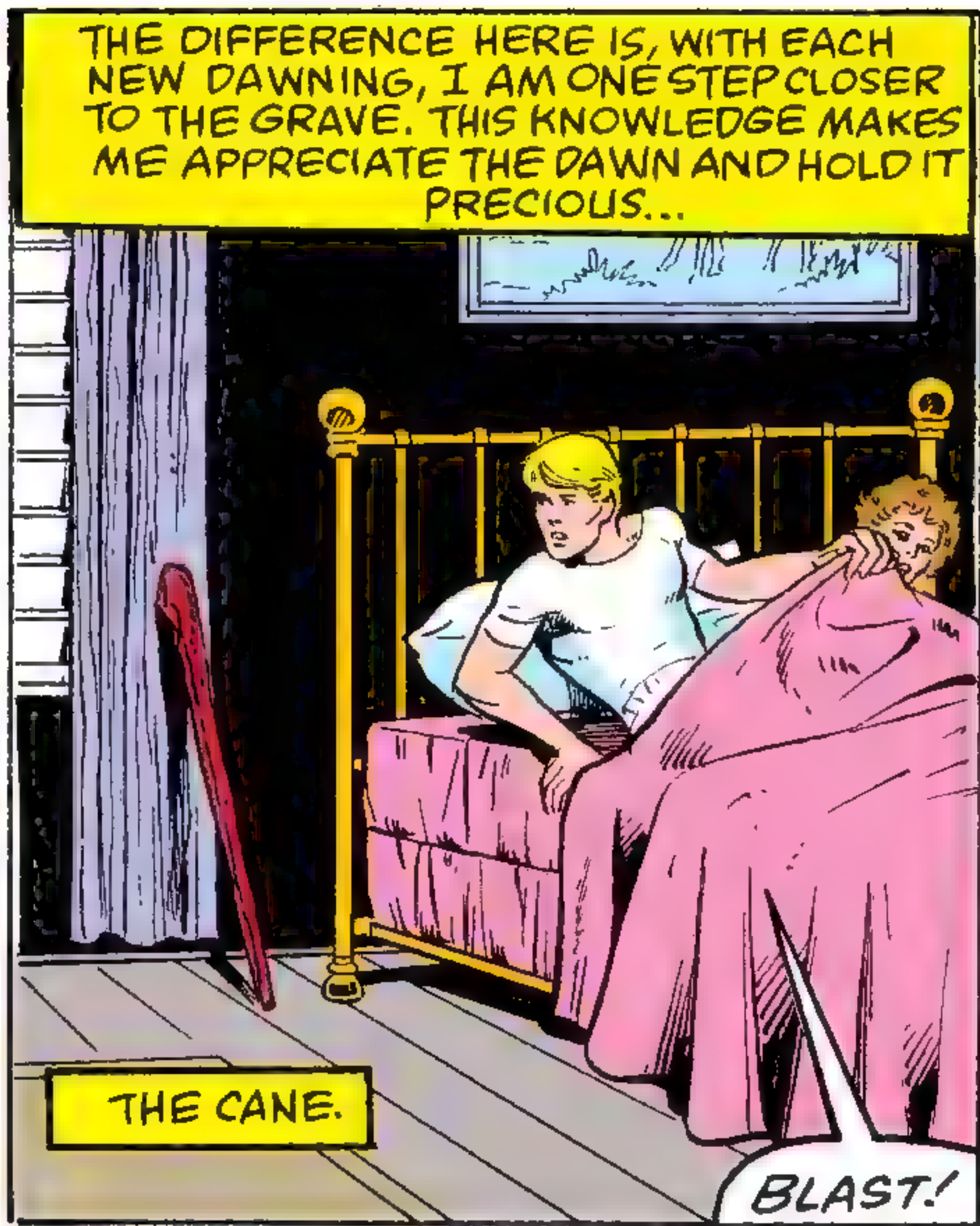
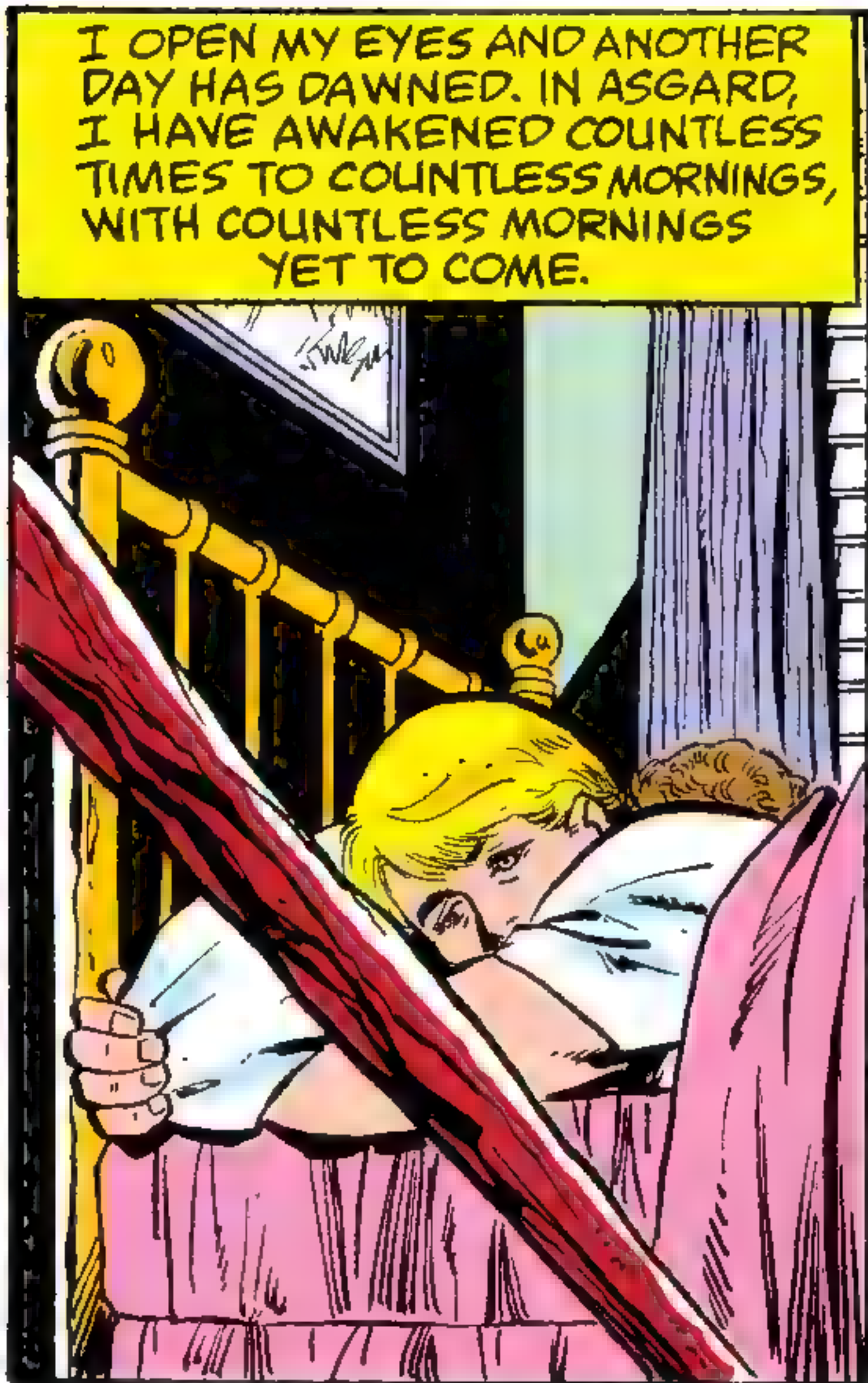
MY LOVE FOR HUMANITY IS EXPOSED AS THE LIE IT TRULY IS.

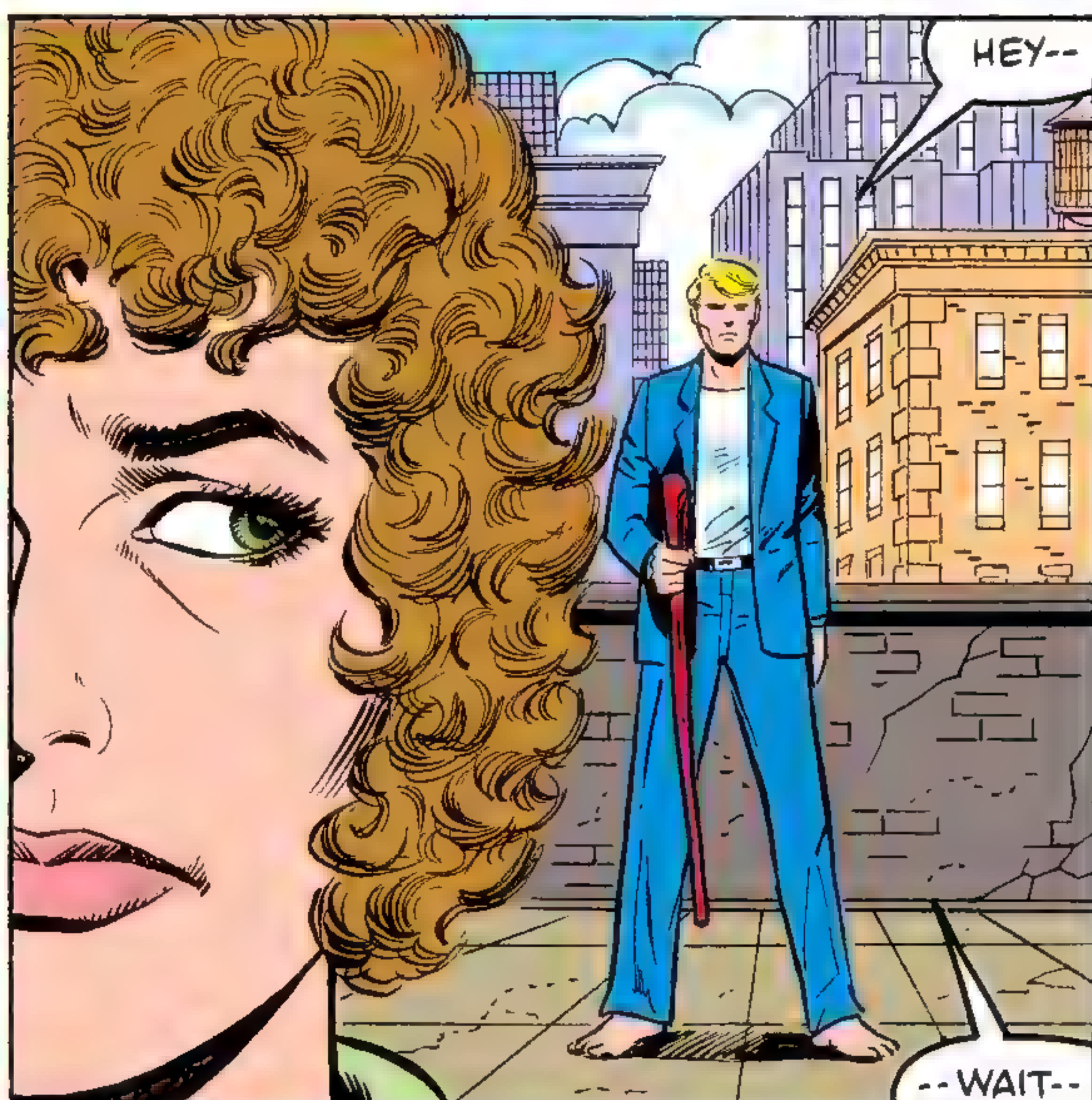
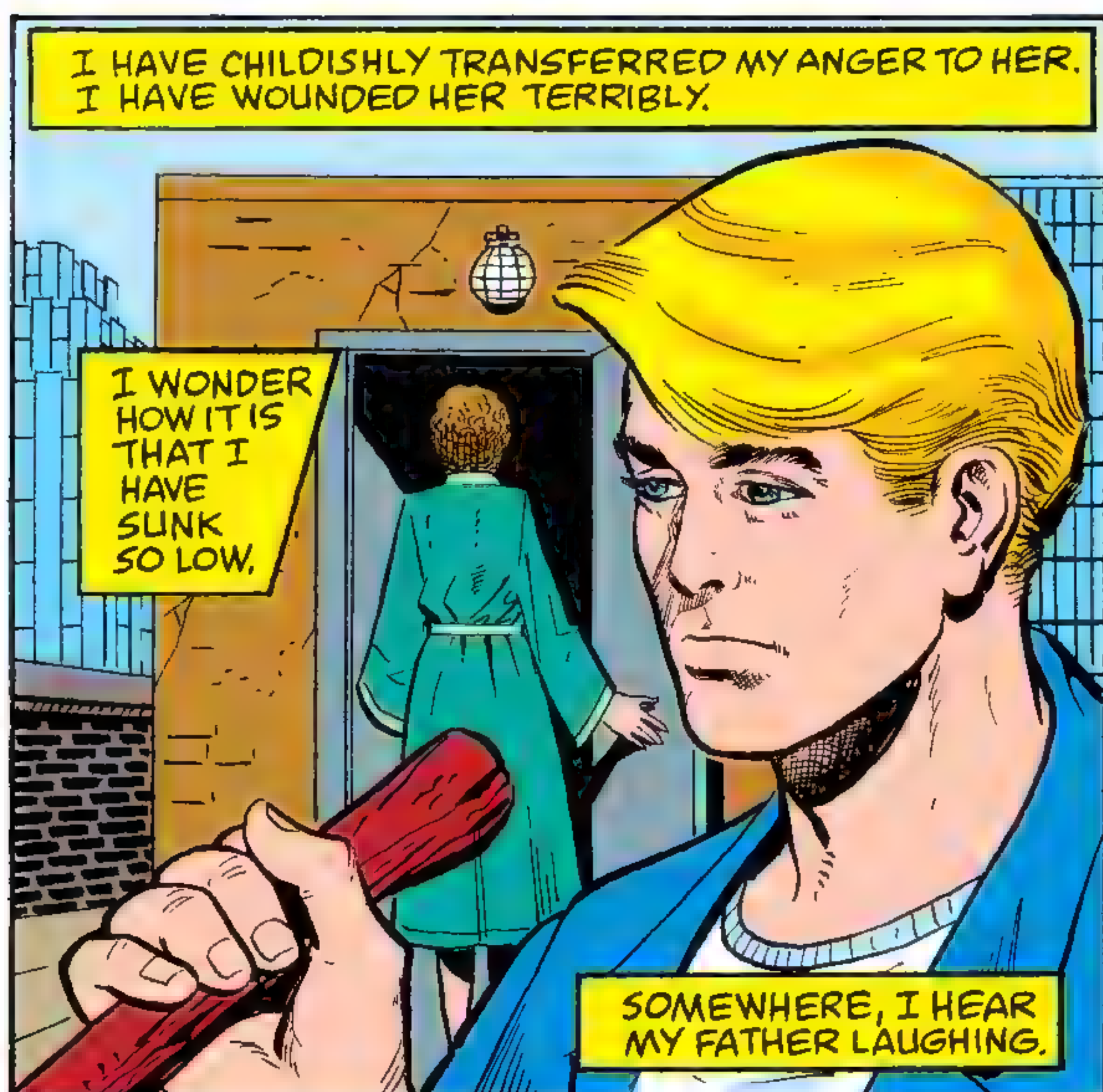
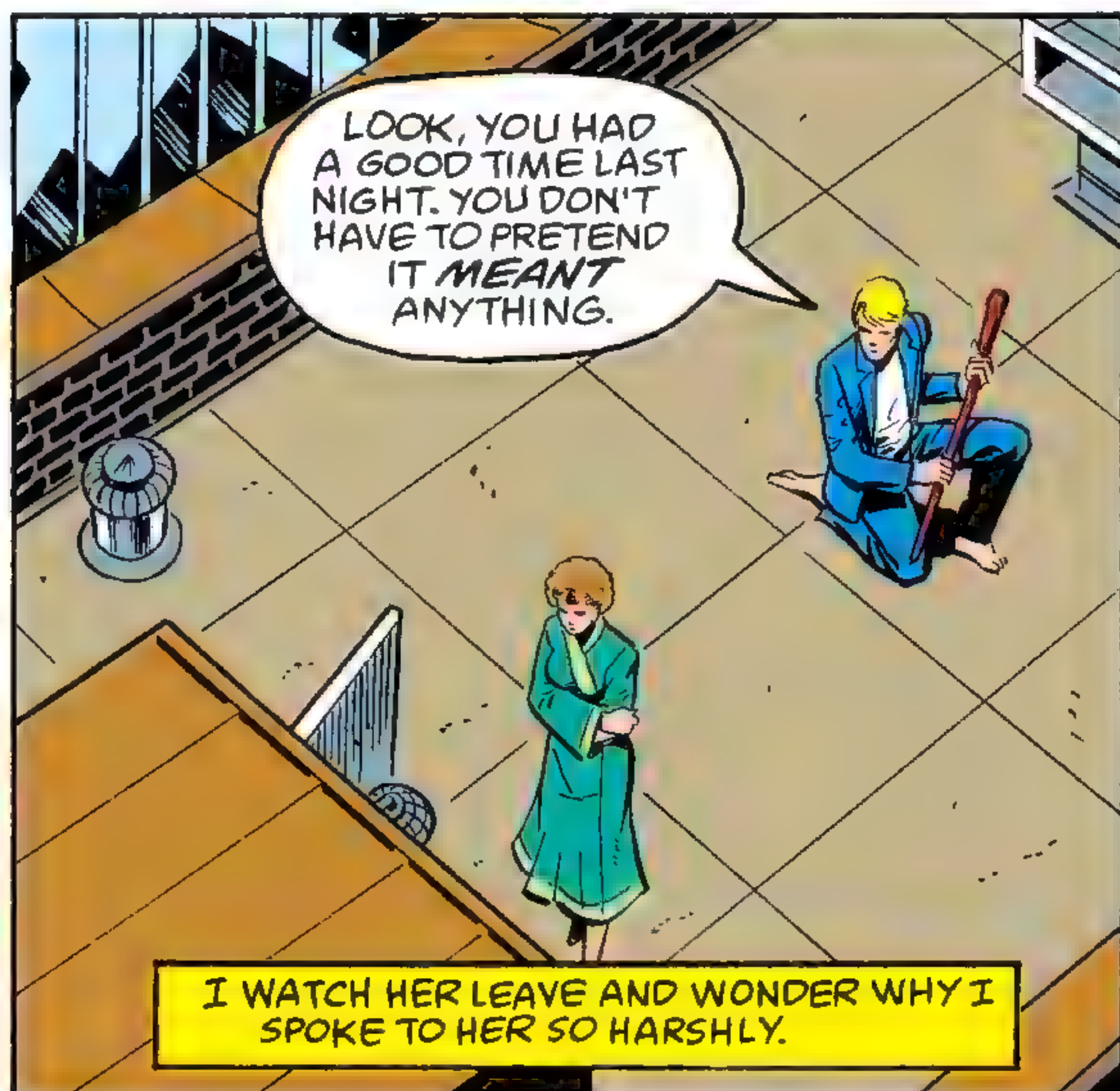
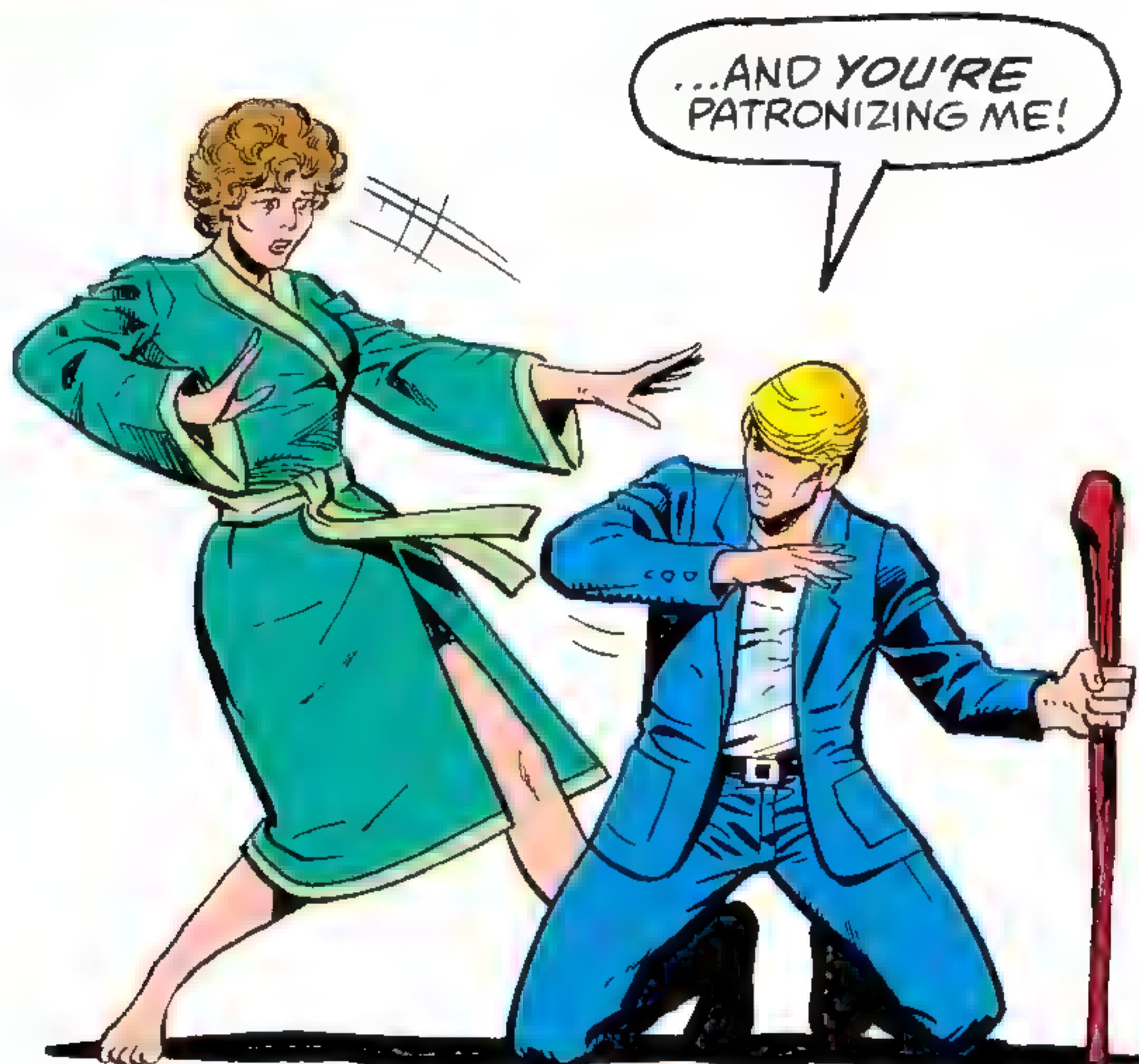
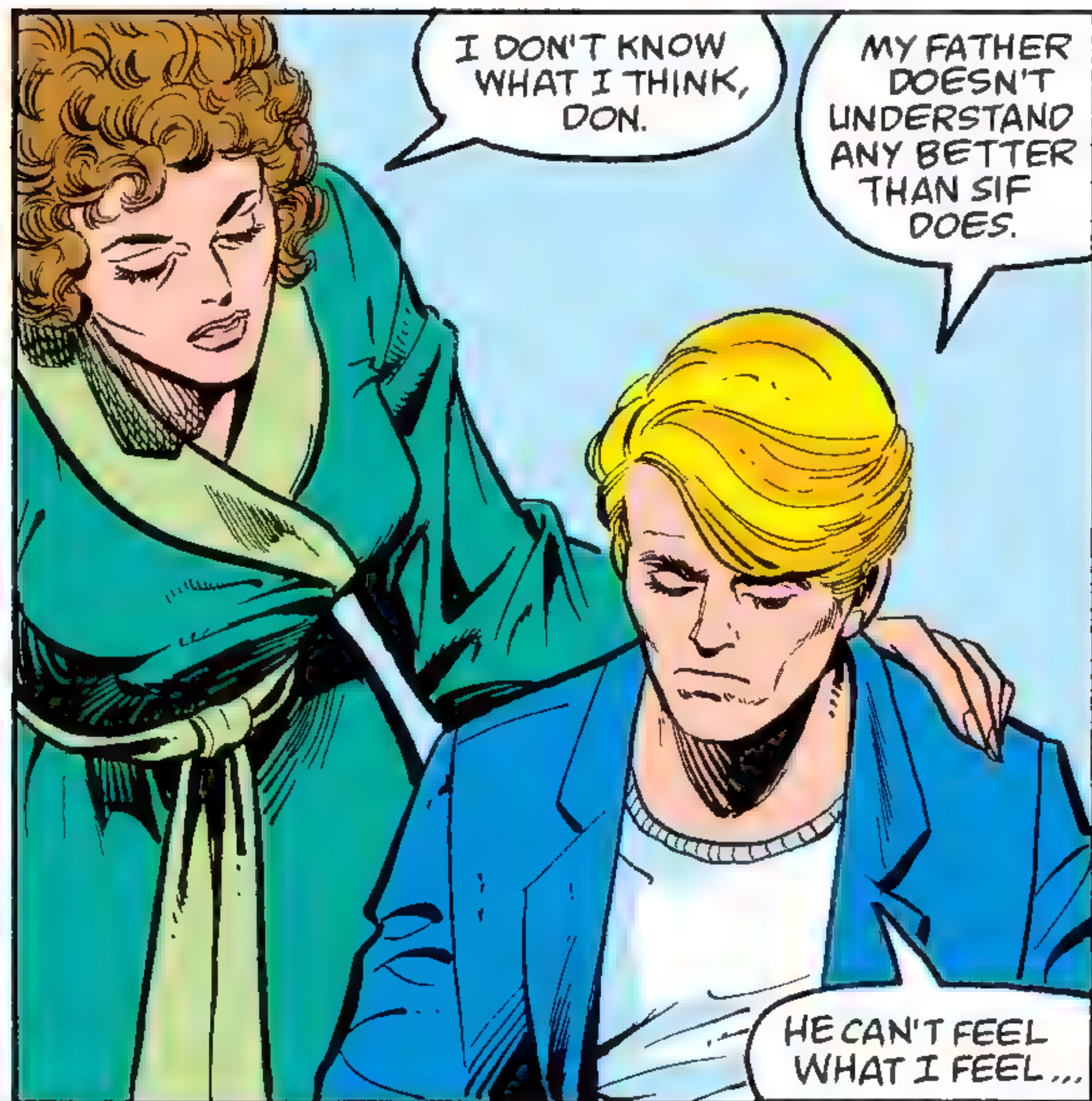
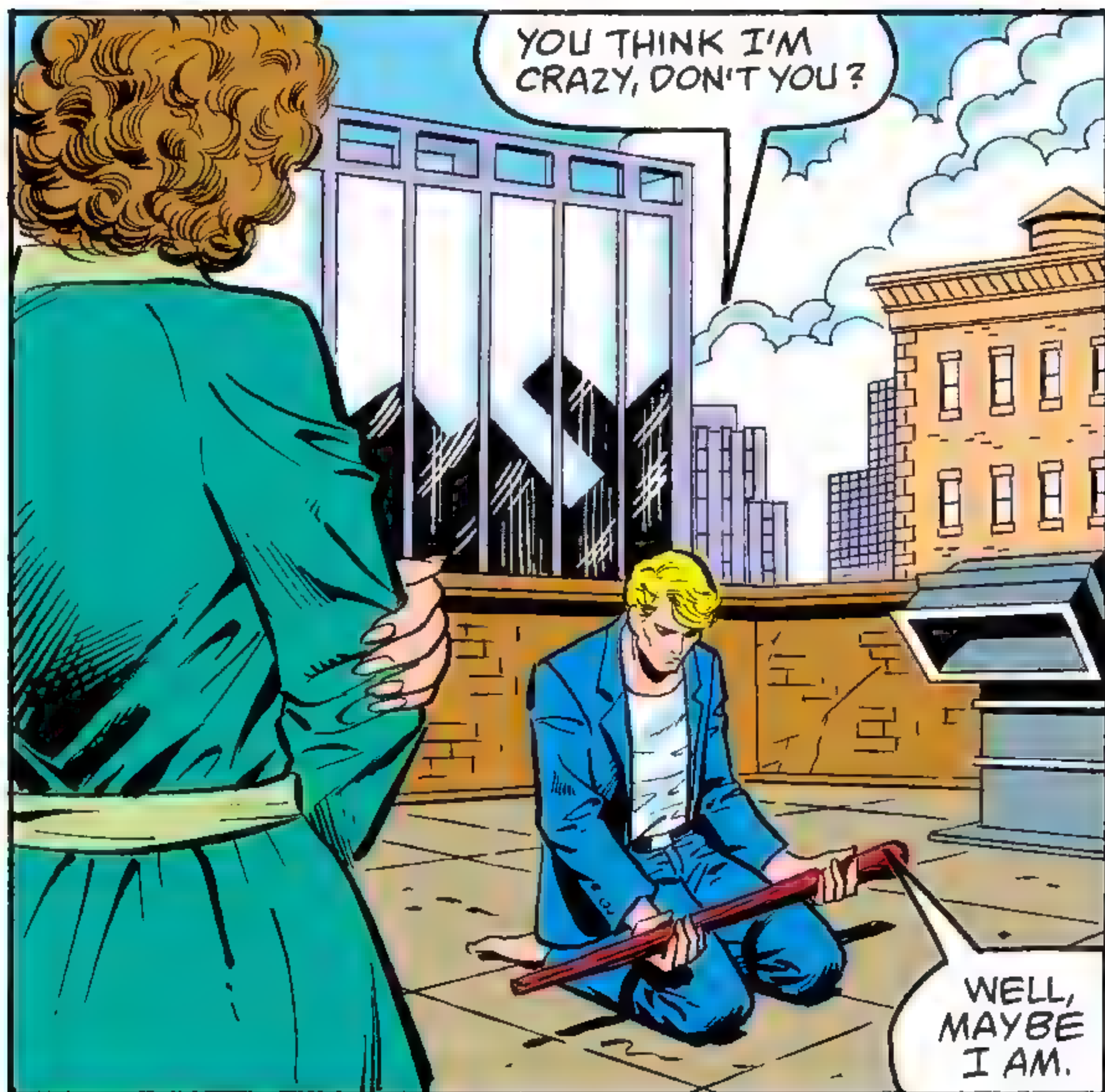


I AM SO TROUBLED BY MY OWN WOES, I'VE YET TO HEAR THIS WOMAN'S SILENT CRY...

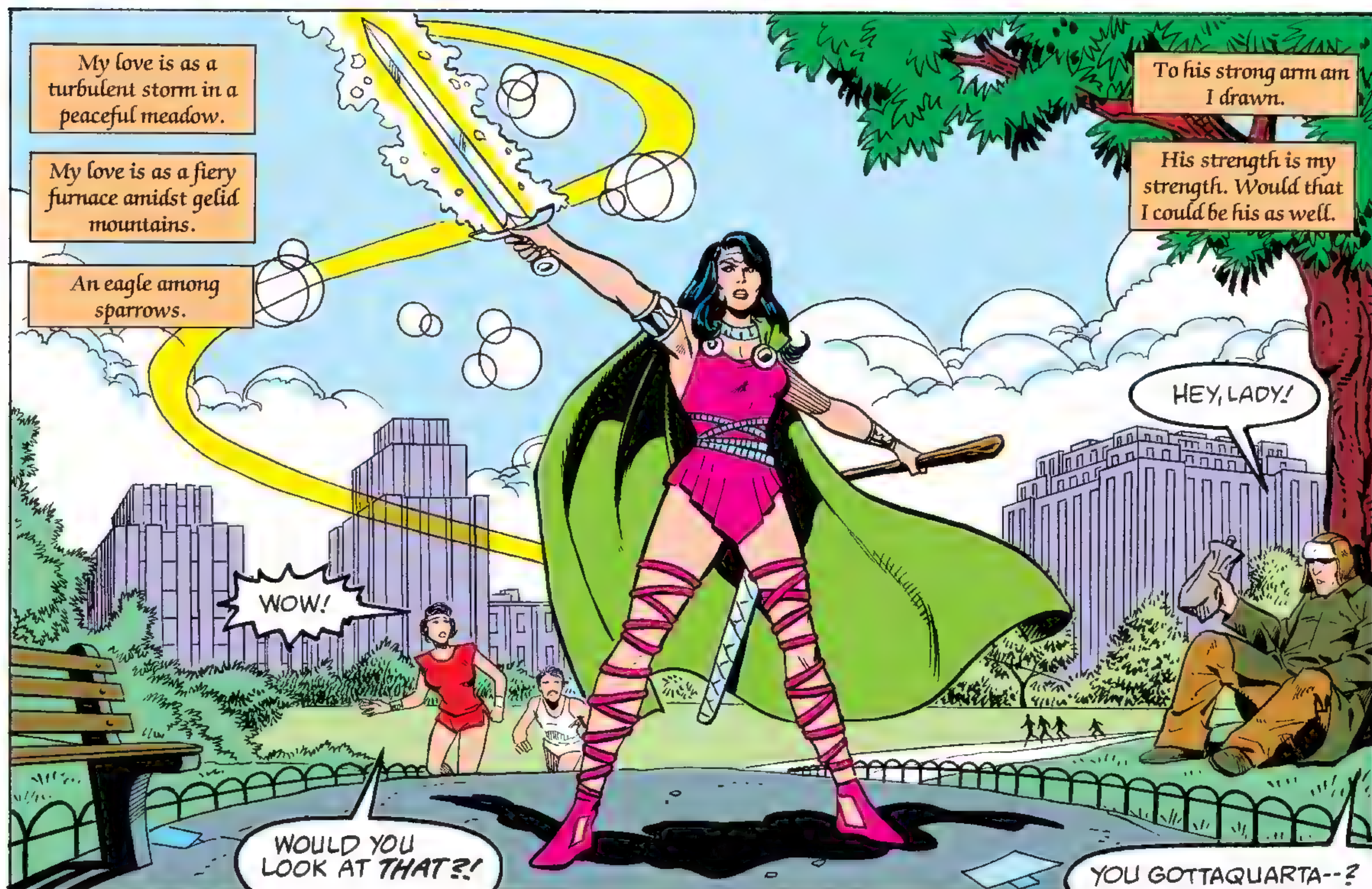
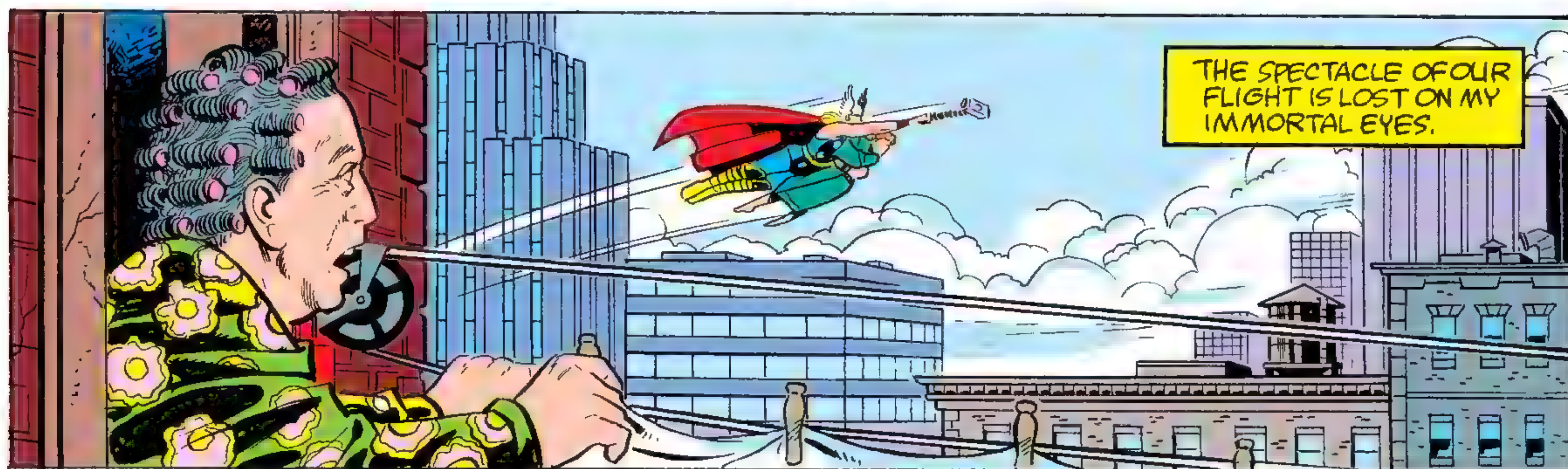
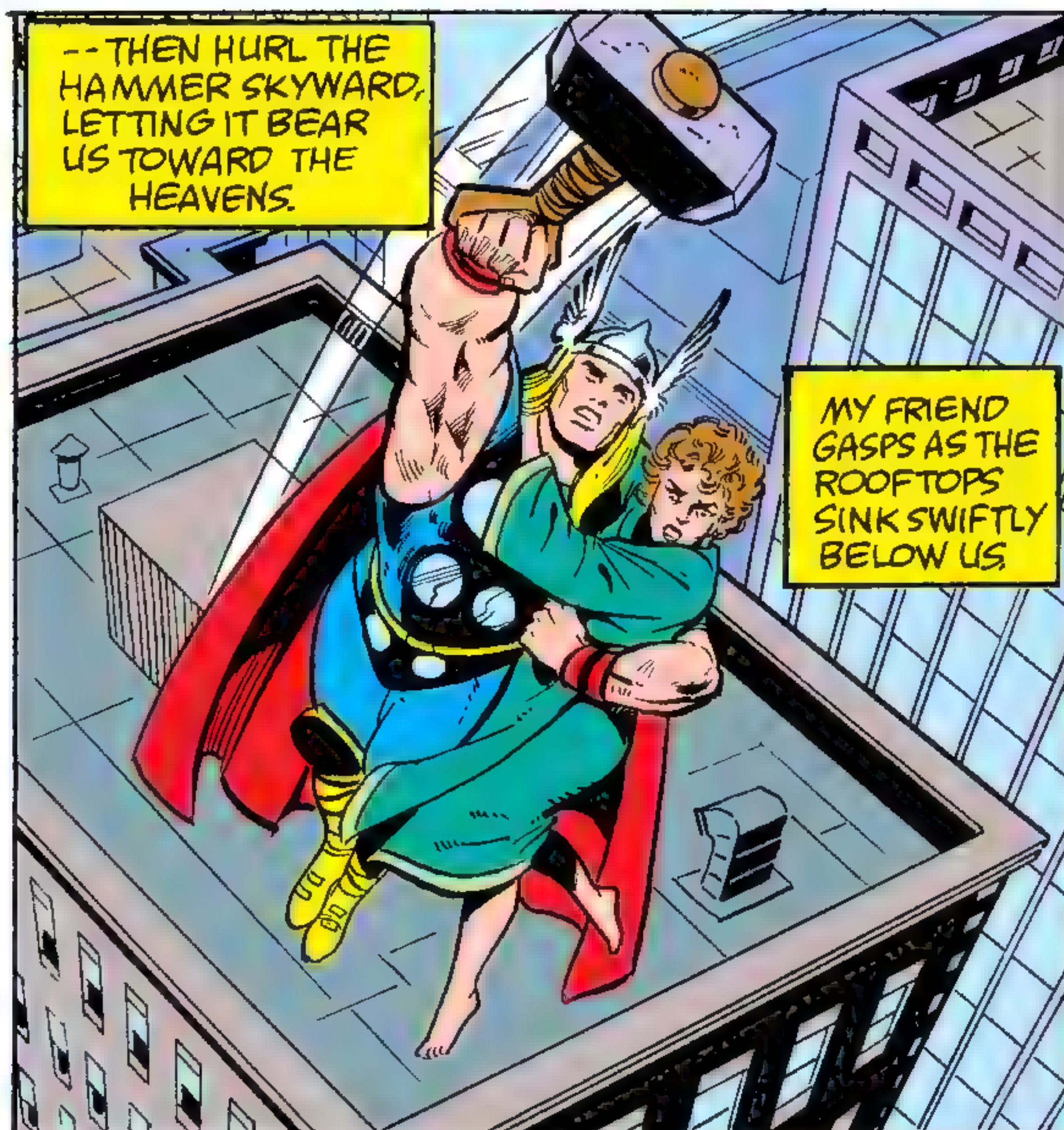


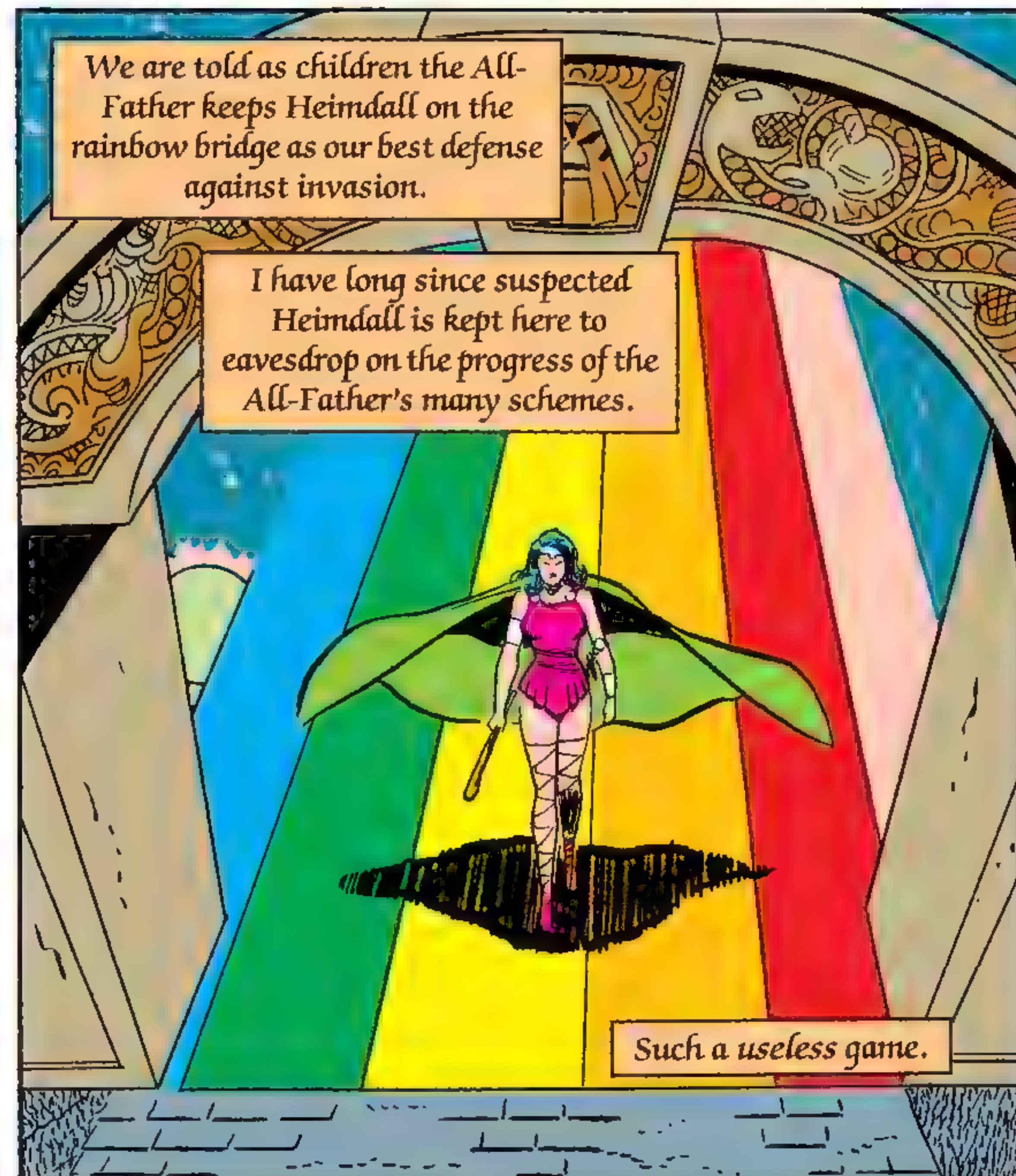
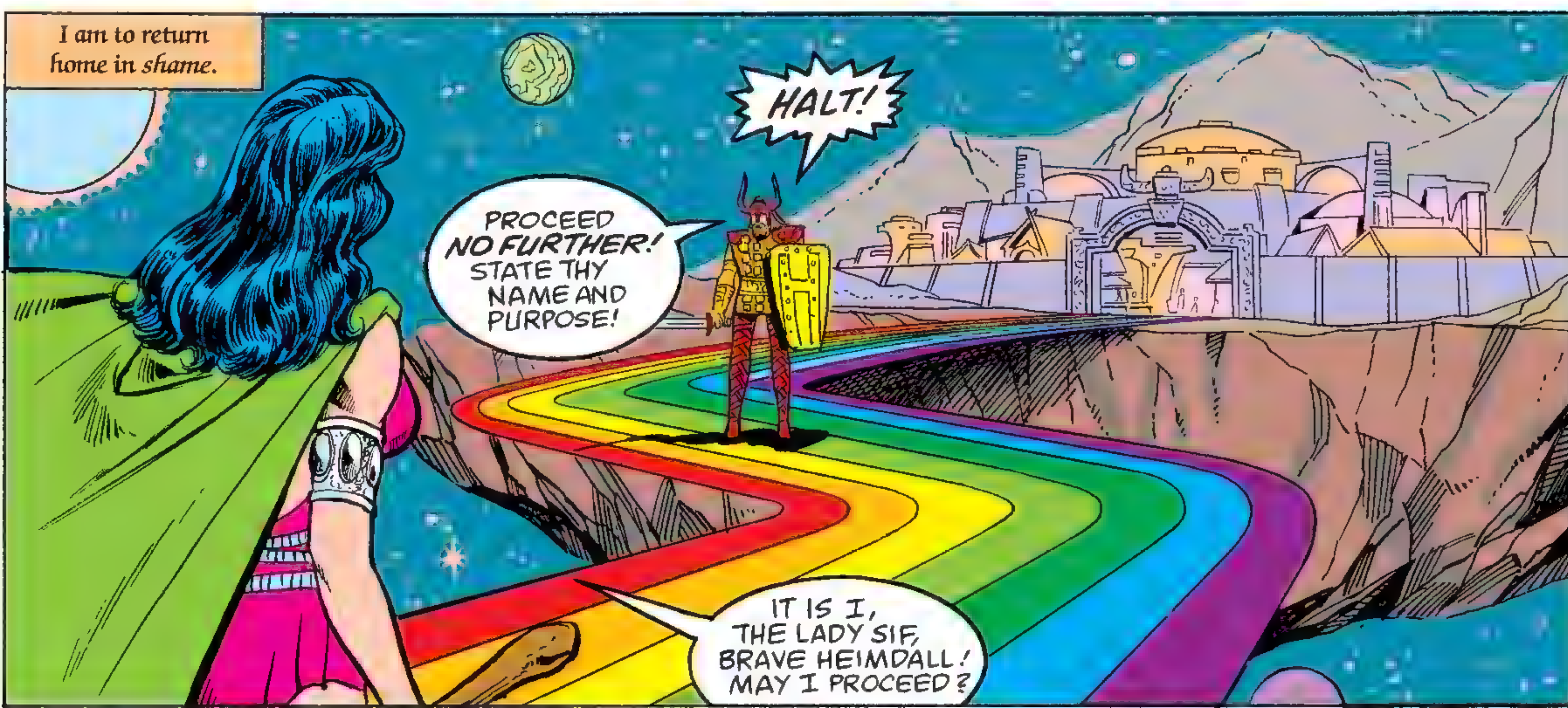
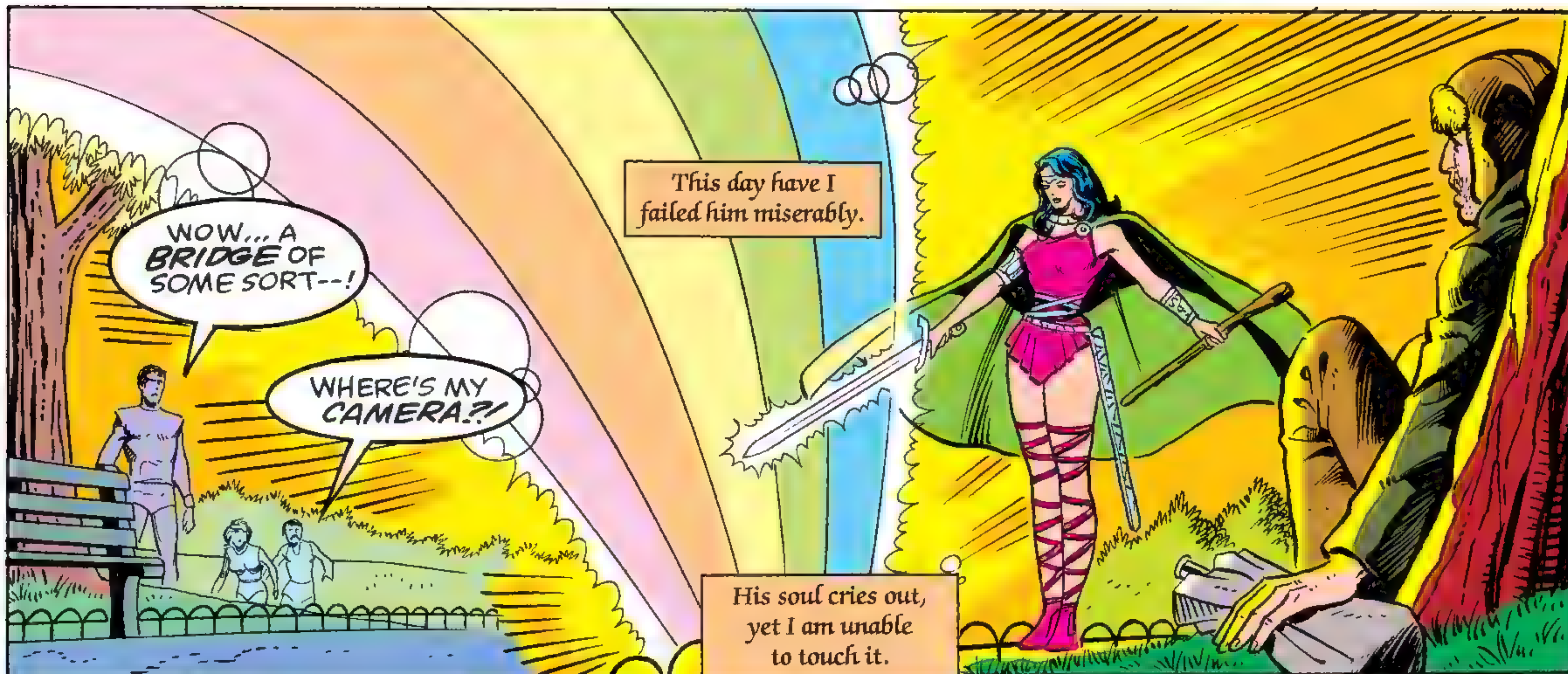














HAIL, *SIF*,
FAIREST OF ALL
GODDESSES!

HAIL, *SIF*! MOST
REVERED OF
GODDESSES!

WELCOME
BACK TO THY
HOME, MILADY!
WELCOME TO...

...*ASGARD*,
HOME OF THE
GODS!

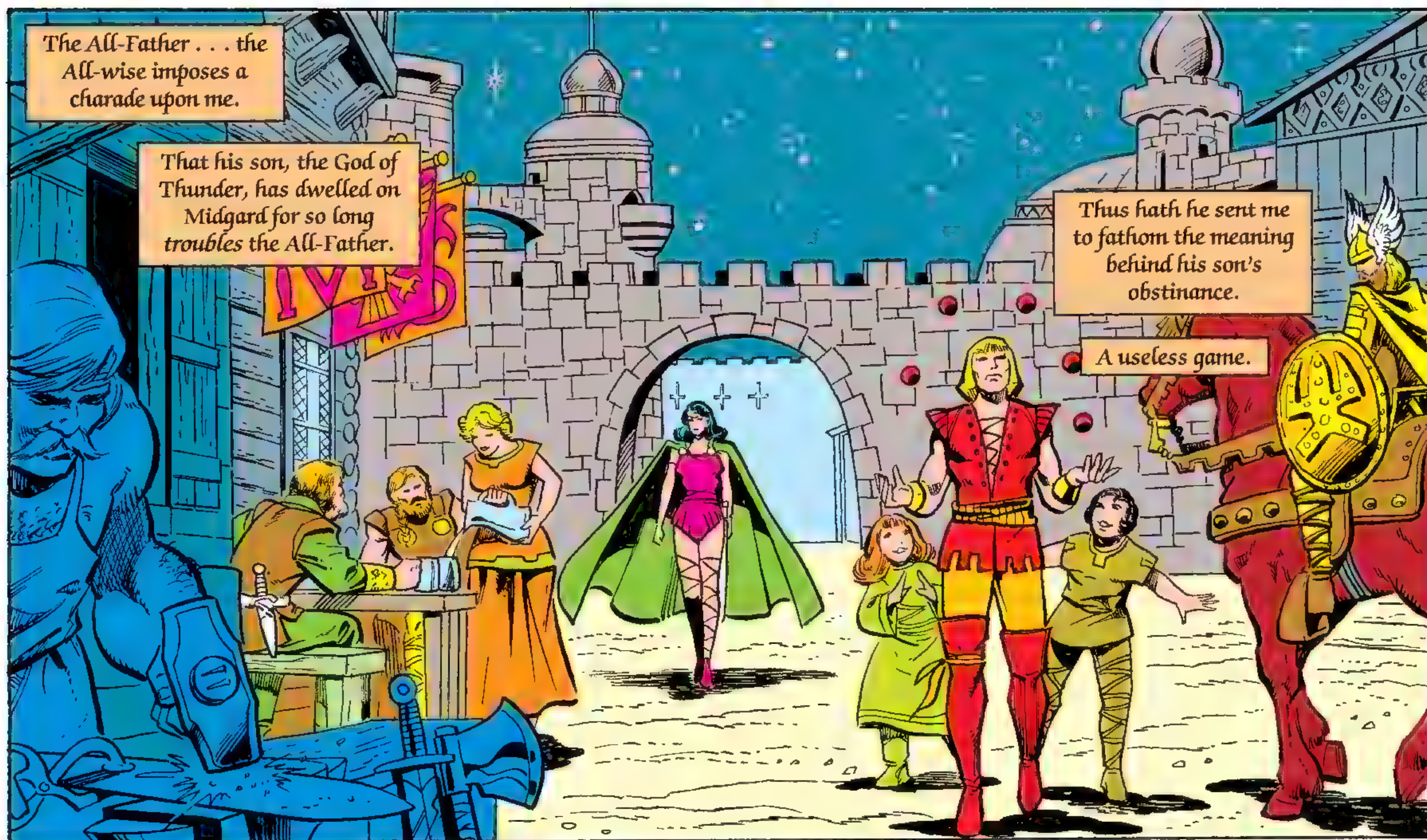
HAIL AND
GREETINGS TO
THEE, MOST VIGILANT
GUARDSMEN!

STILL, BE SURE TO
TEMPER THY FLATTERY
LEST THOU DOST INVITE
THE **SCORN** OF EVERY
OTHER GODDESS!

Home.

A place to lay my weary
head. A warm hearth, the
sounds of laughter and
song.

Yet, without my
beloved, this place
seems as barren
as a closed tomb.



The All-Father . . . the All-wise imposes a charade upon me.

That his son, the God of Thunder, has dwelled on Midgard for so long troubles the All-Father.

Thus hath he sent me to fathom the meaning behind his son's obstinance.

A useless game.



The All-Father knows full well the complex motives behind his son's actions.

HAIL, BRAVE WARRIOR!

HAIL, LADY SIF!

I am but a tool in another of the All-Father's intrigues.



Here, at Odinpallace, shall I report that which the All-Father already knows.

I shall play out my role in obedient subservience.



Even as my heart is torn asunder.

MY LORD--

ALL-WISE AND ETERNAL SOVEREIGN...

THE LADY SIF APPROACHETH!

SUNS RISE AND GIVE OF THEIR WARMTH A FRAGMENT OF LIFE. AND, IN THAT INSIGNIFICANT, FLICKERING MOMENT MORTAL MEN SPEND LIFETIMES RUSHING HEAD-
LONG INTO OBLIVION.

MORTAL MEN ARE AS GNATS, HAUGHTILY PARADING THEIR MERETRICKIOUS APERY OF US GODS, WHILE CLOTHED IN OUR VERY IMAGE.

MY SON ESPOUSES A FELLOWSHIP WITH MAGGOTS.

AND, NOW HE IS TORN. HE WONDERS AS TO HIS TRUE HOME. HIS TRUE *PLACE*. BE IT MIDGARD OR ASSGARD? AMONG MEN OR GODS?

HE IS A FOOL.

AND YET, ALL GOES EXACTLY AS I HAVE FORESEEN.

LONG AGO, IN ANGER, I HALVED MY SON'S GODHOOD AND IMPOSED ON HIM *MORTALITY*. AND, IN SO DOING...

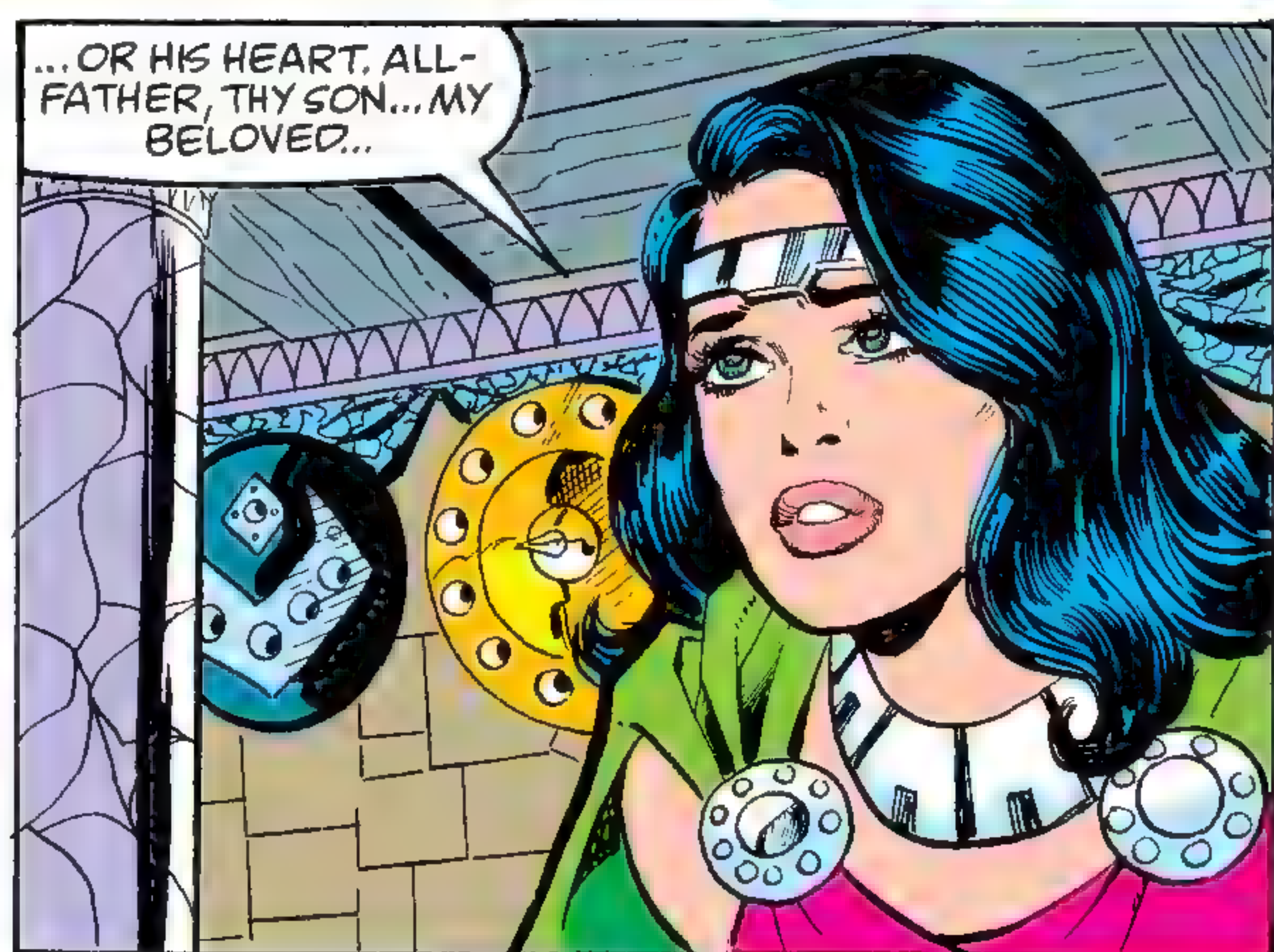
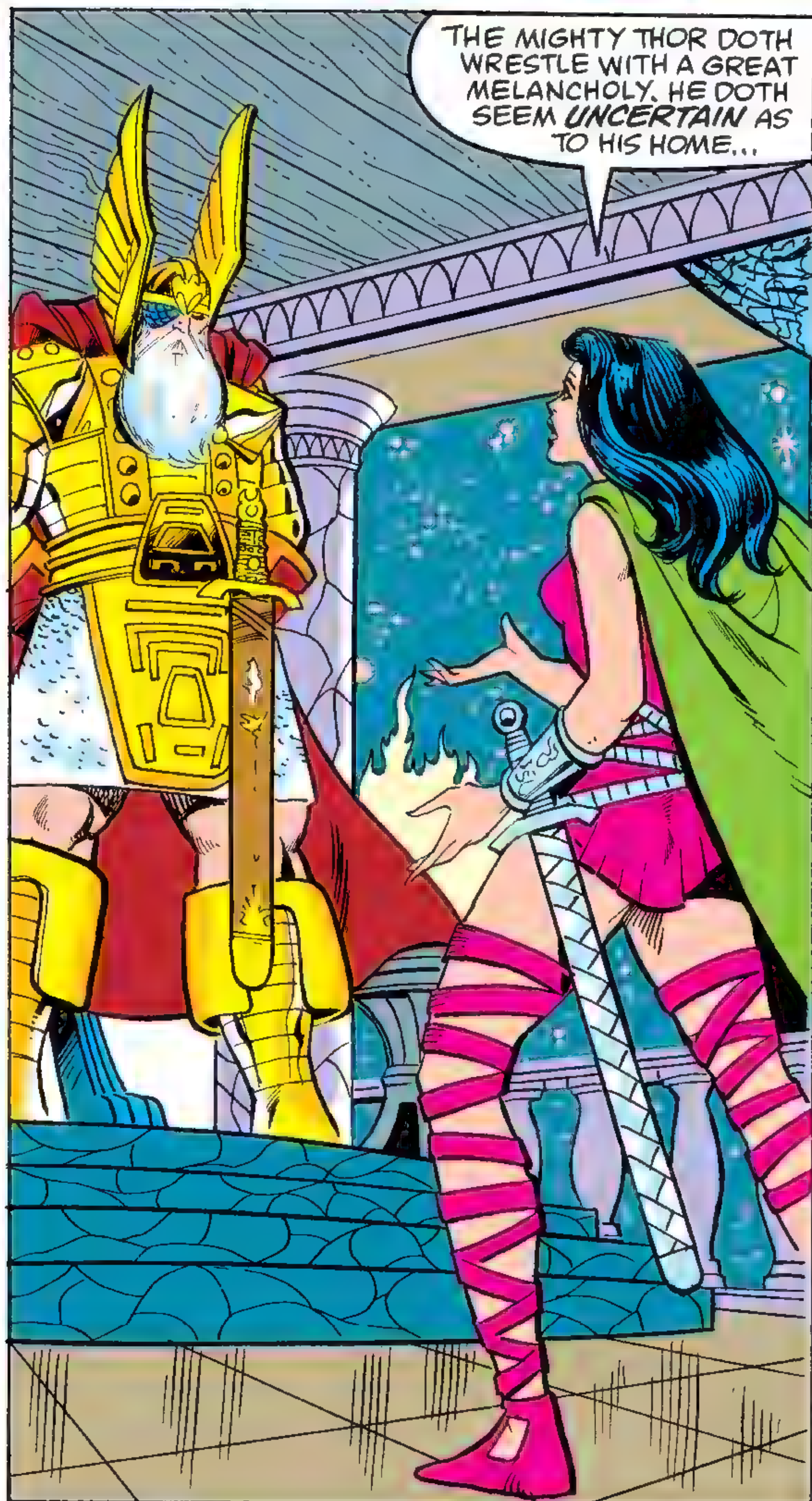
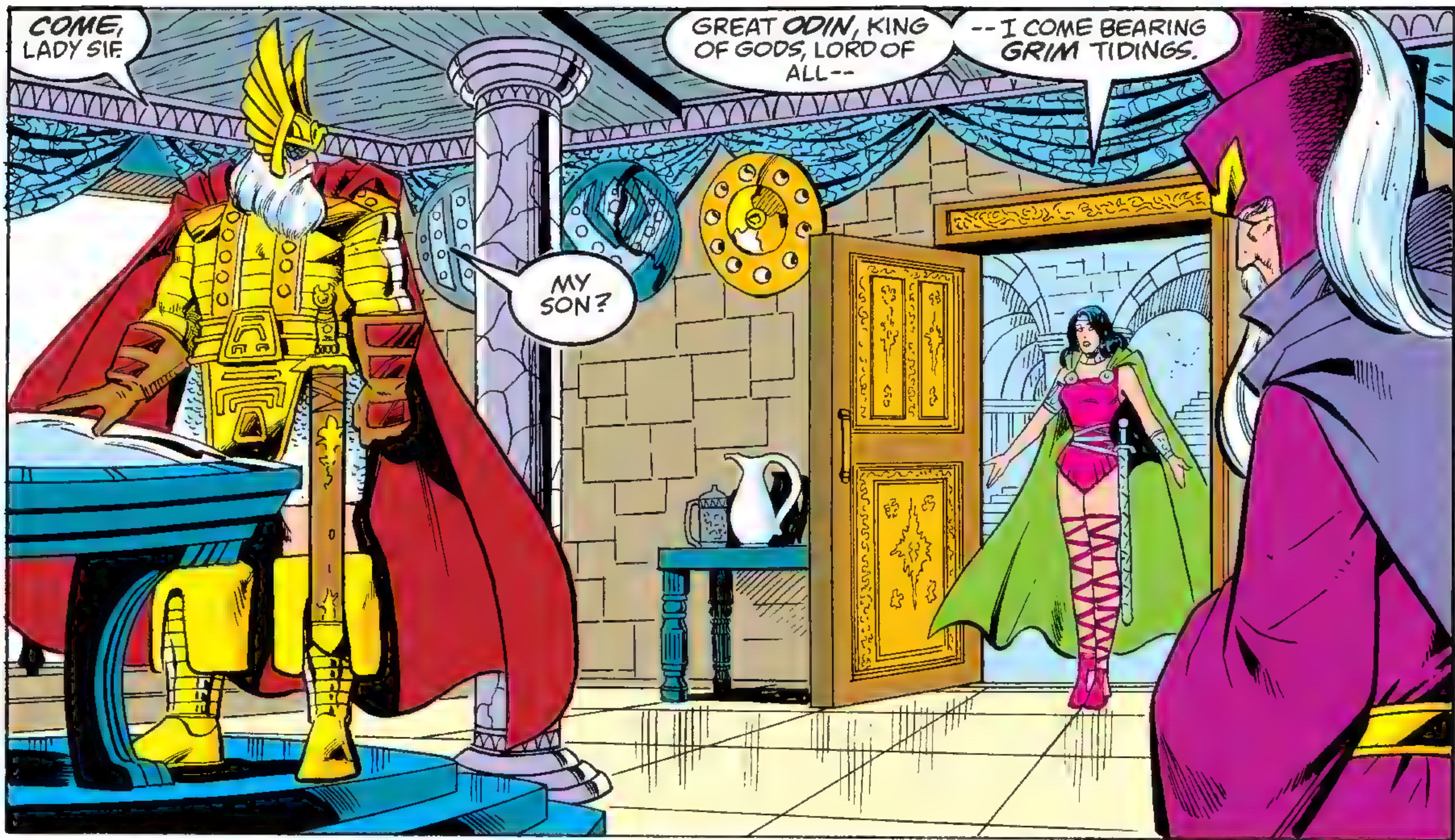
... HAVE I SENTENCED HIM TO *DEATH*. FOR, GODHOOD IN ALL ITS SPLENDOR IS AS A MONOTONOUS, NUMBING ETERNAL DAMNATION TO ONE WHO KNOWS THE EXHILARATION OF TIME PASSING QUICKLY AND *IRRETRIEVABLY*. AYE...

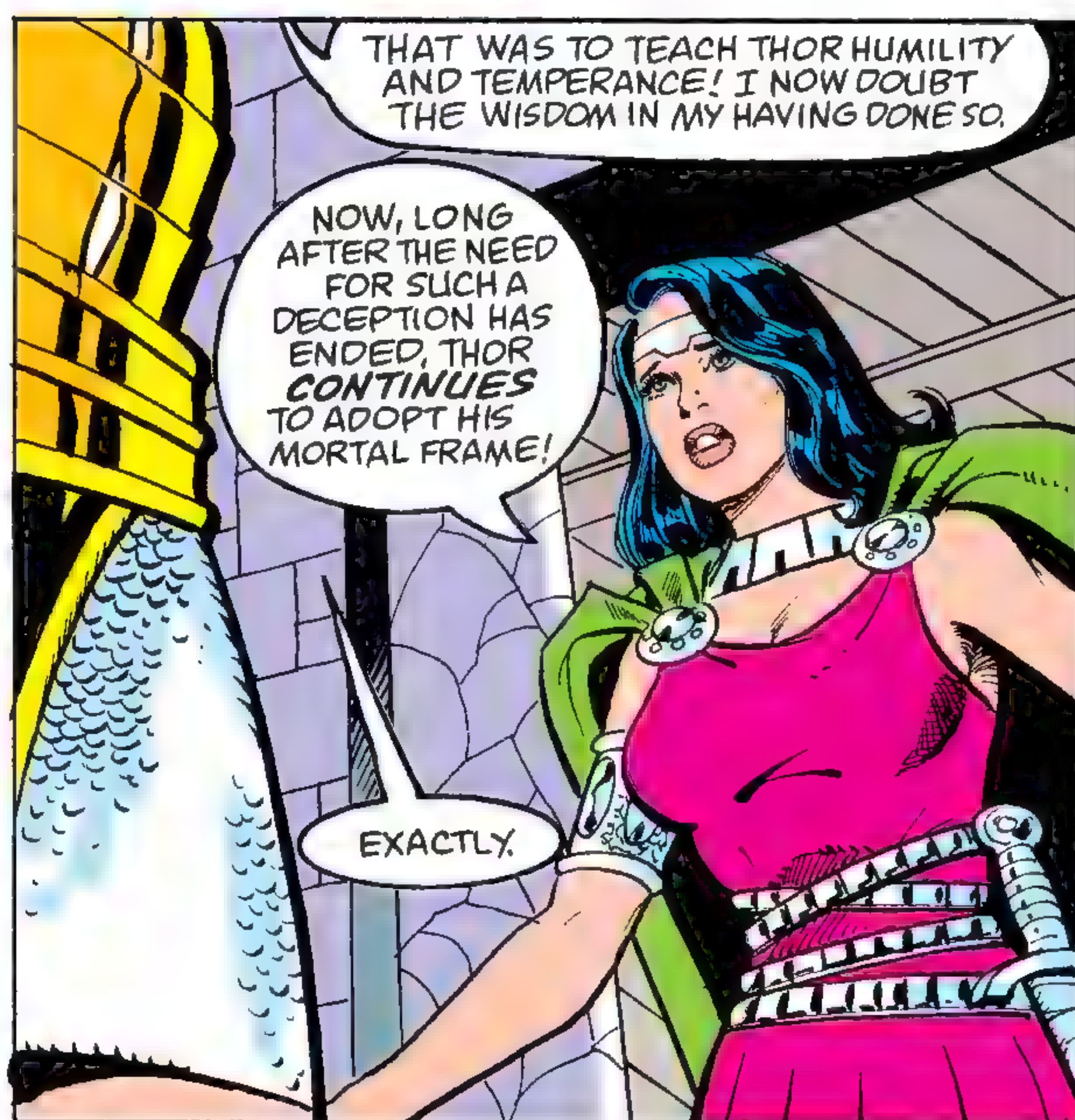
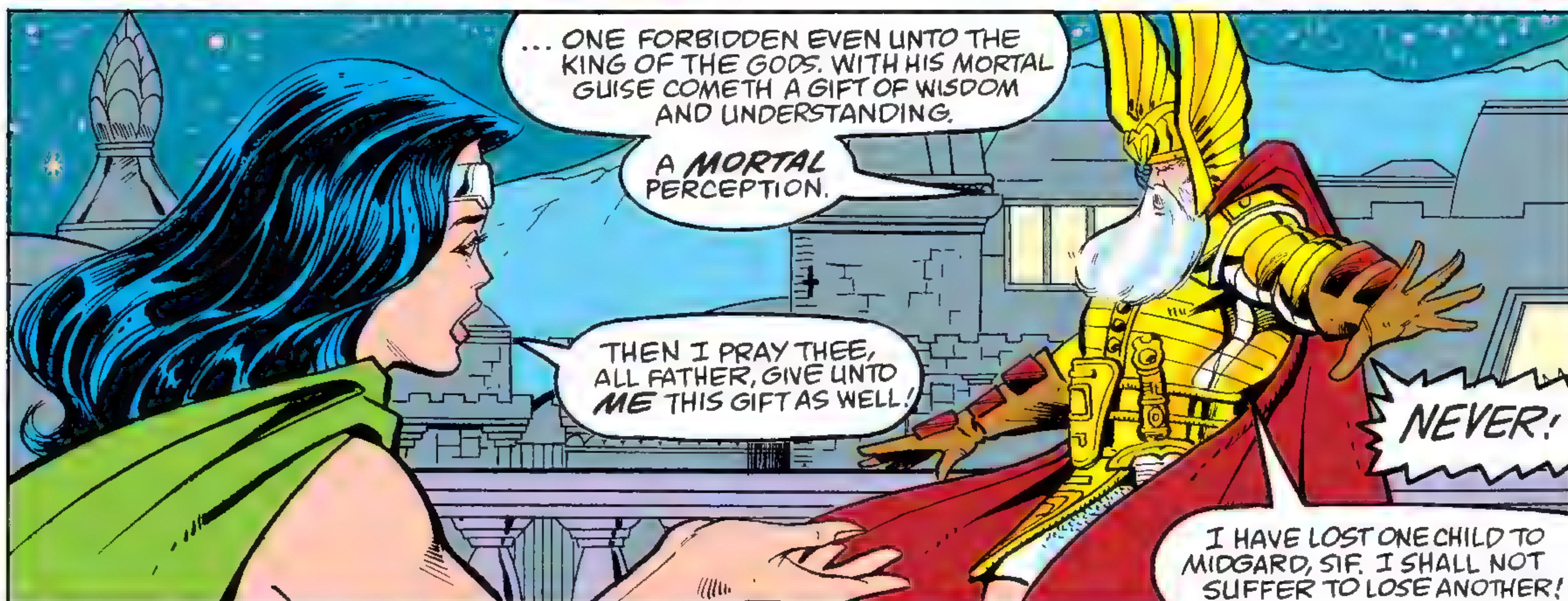
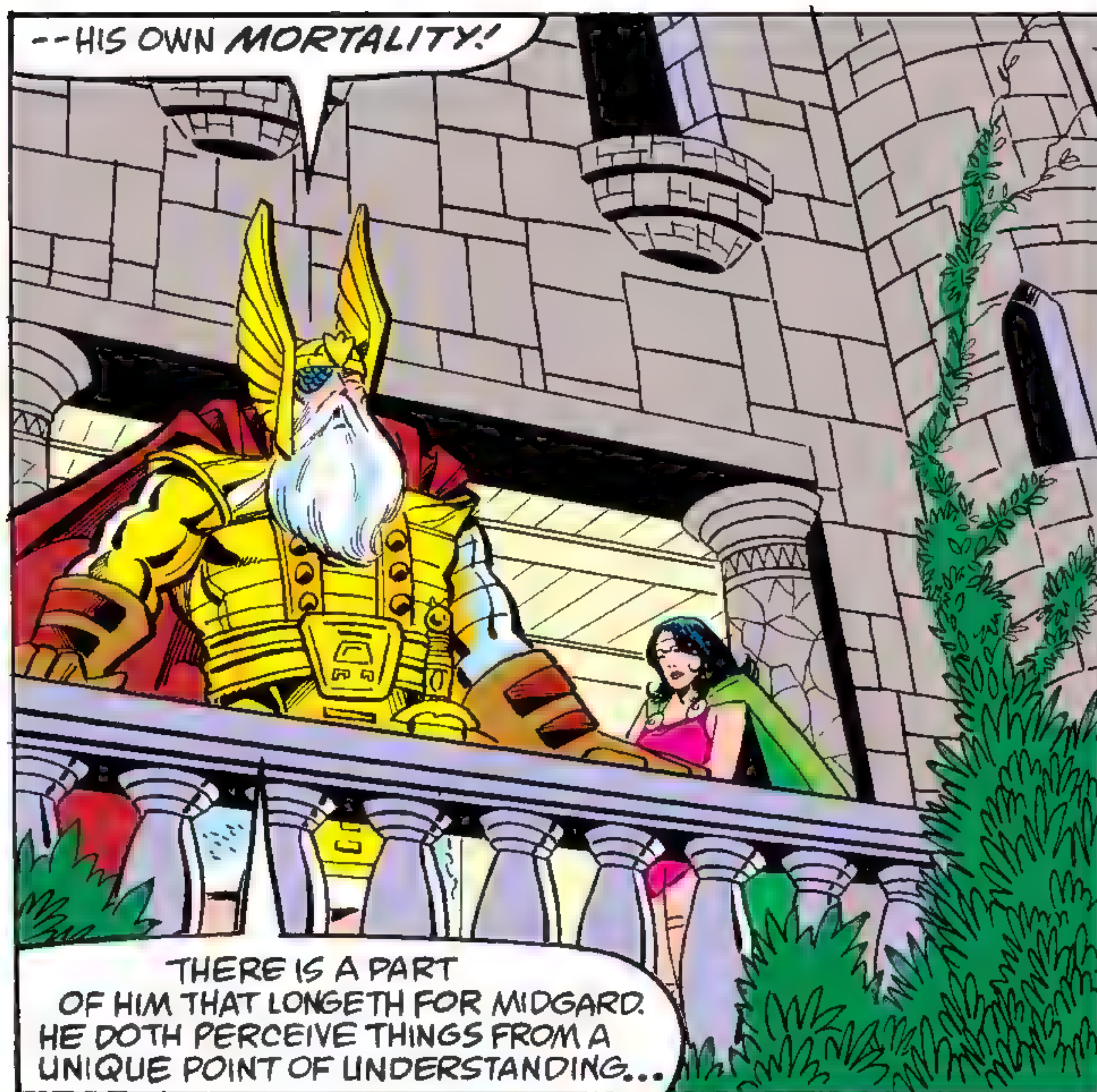
MORTALITY IS A *GIFT*. NOW, LONG AFTER THE NEED FOR HIM TO DO SO HAS PASSED, MY SON CONTINUES TO ADOPT HIS MORTAL GUISE, AS A MORTAL, HE IS SUBJECT TO AGING, SICKNESS, INJURY...

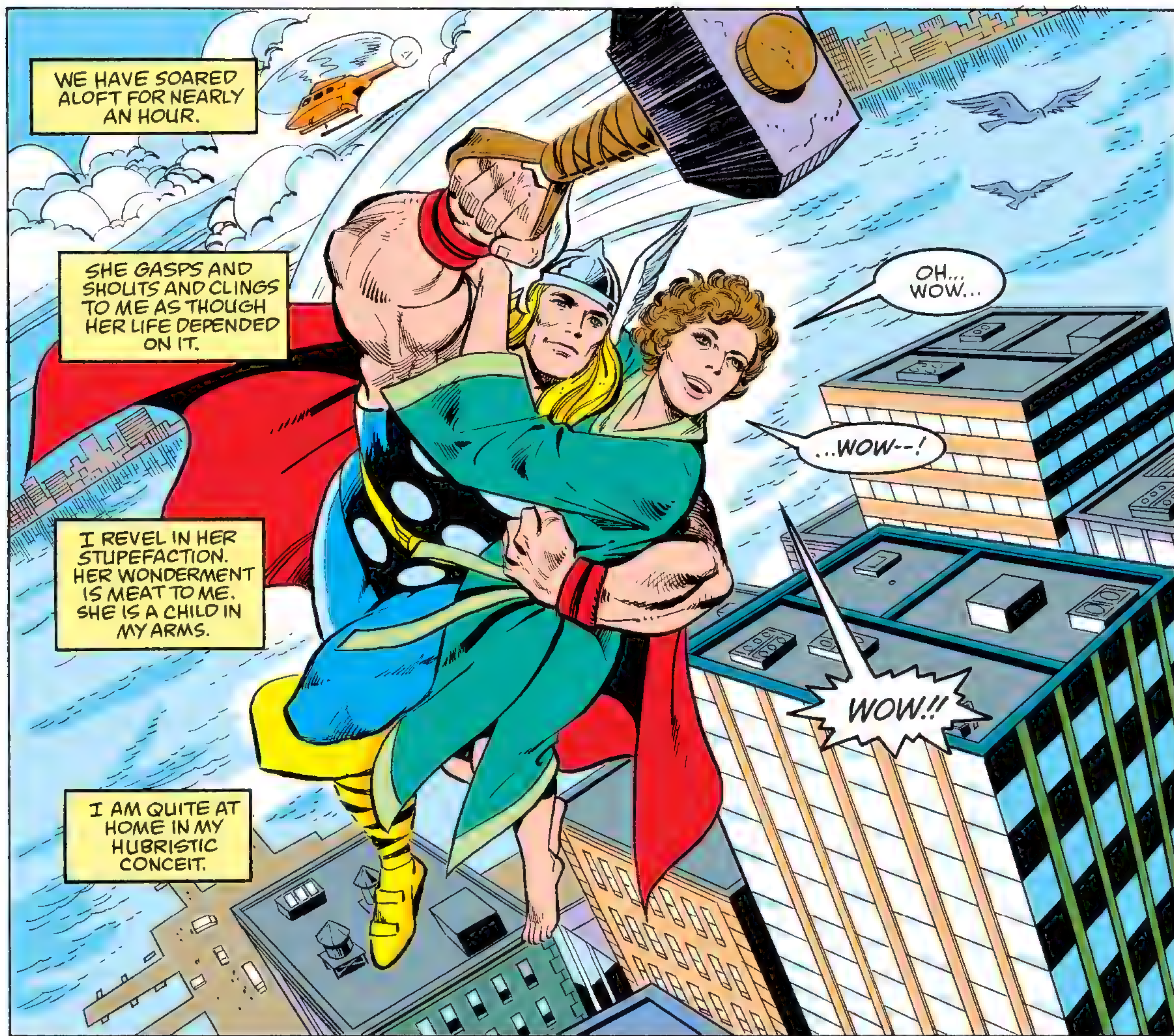
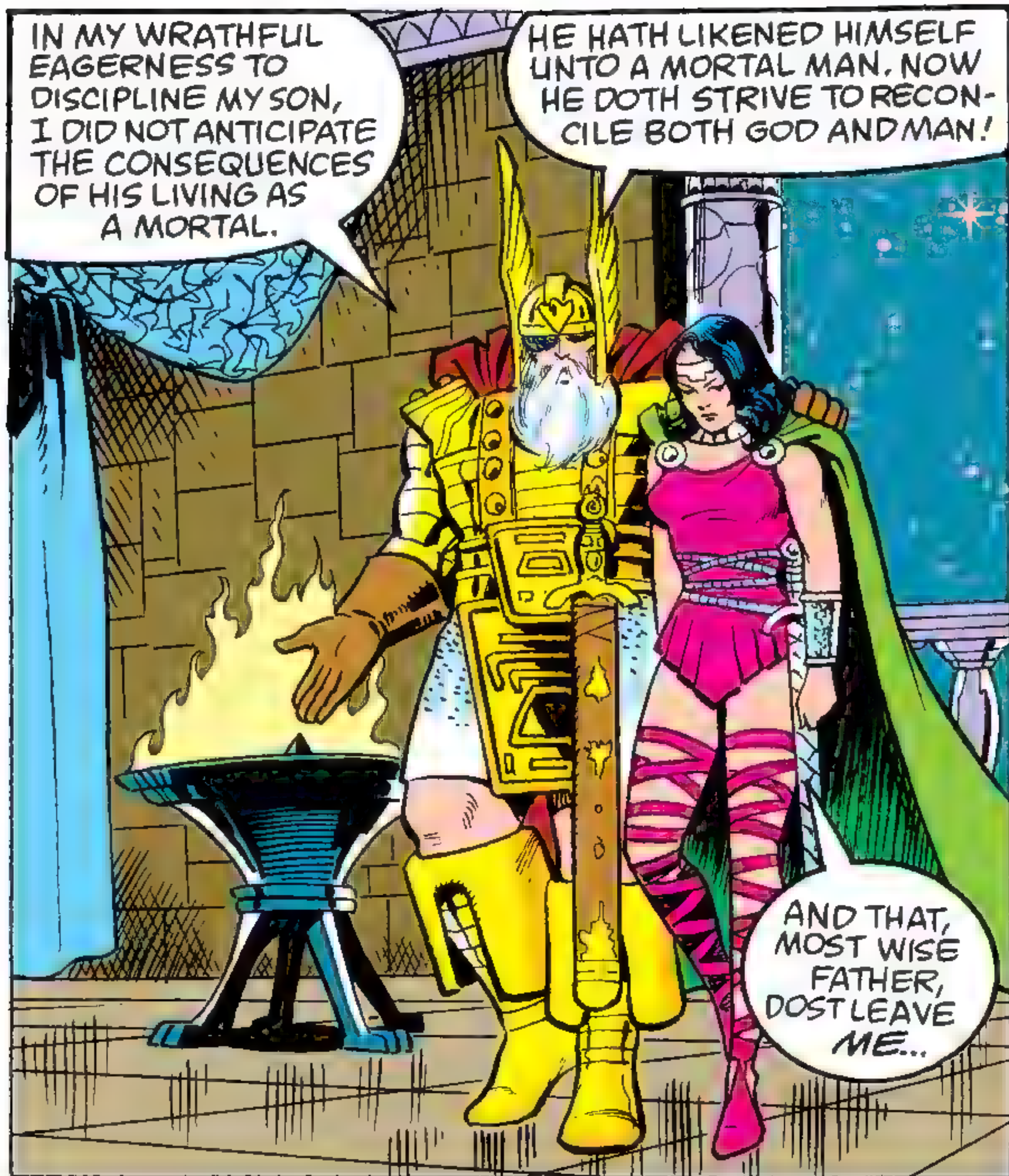
... EVEN DEATH. HIS VERY EXISTENCE IS AT RISK EACH TIME HE EMBRACES HIS MORTAL SIDE. MY HEART *ACHES* WITH EACH HOUR HE SPENDS AS "DONALD BLAKE."

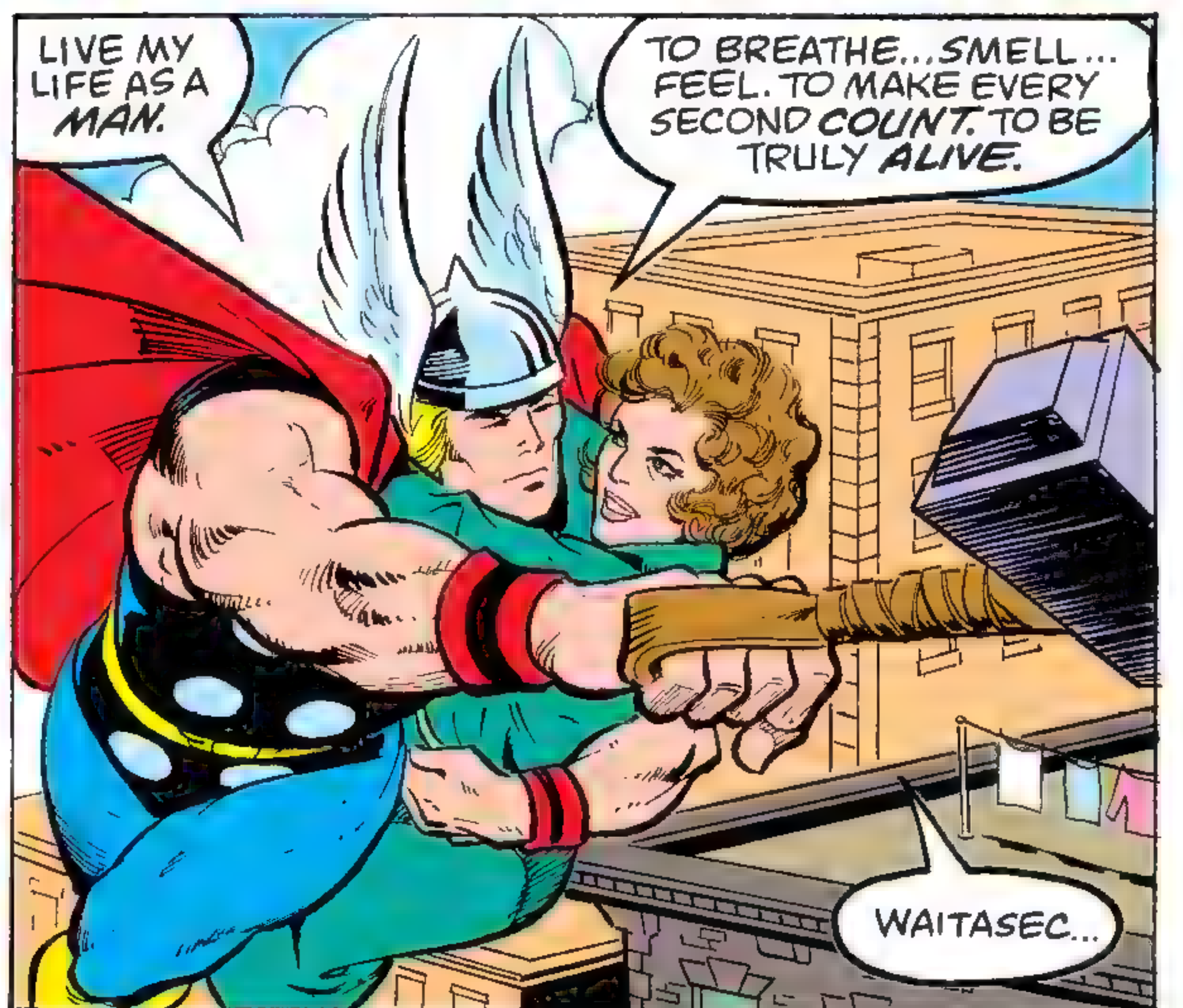
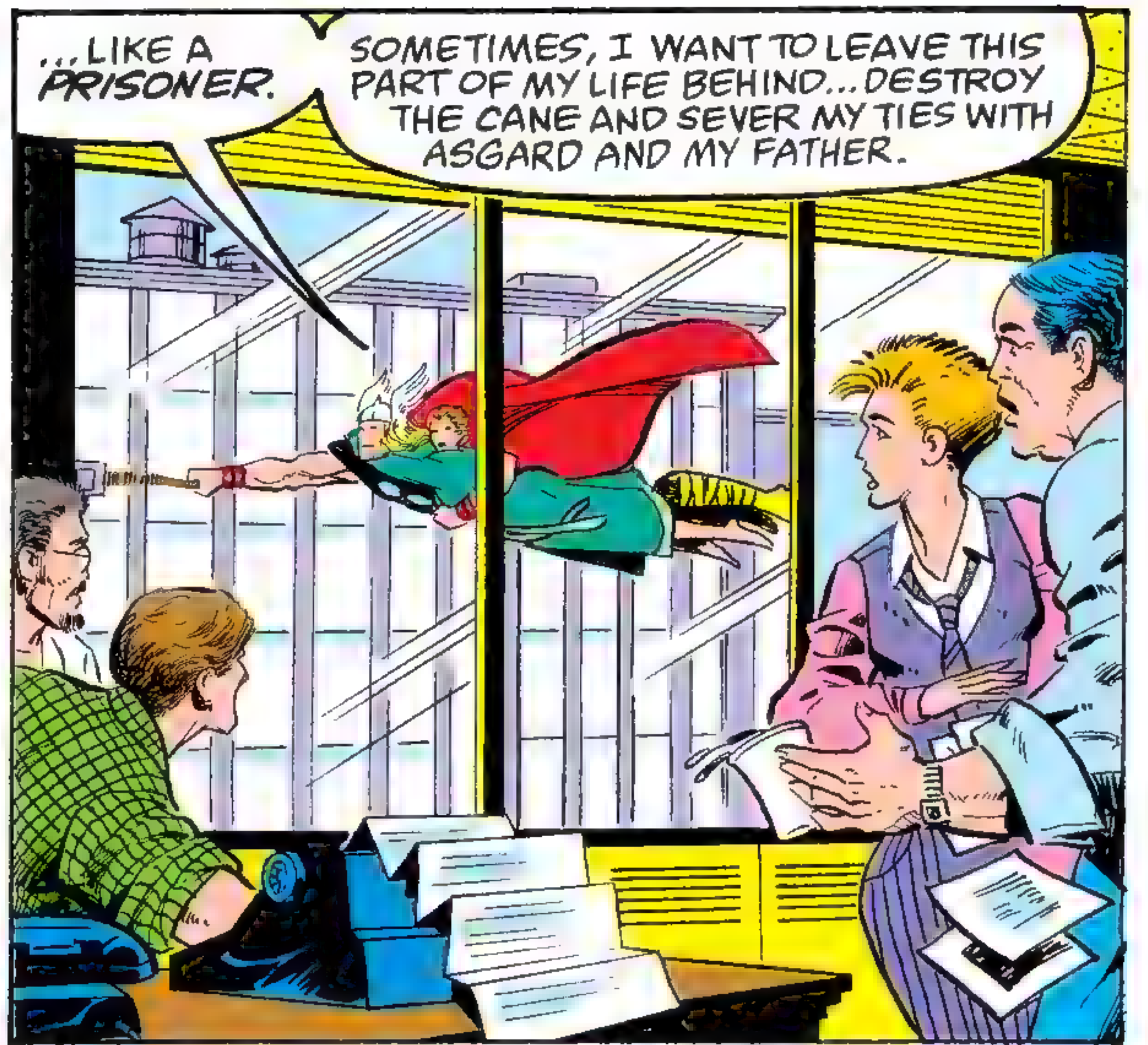
AND NOW HE SEEMS TO REJECT HIS GODHOOD *ENTIRELY*...

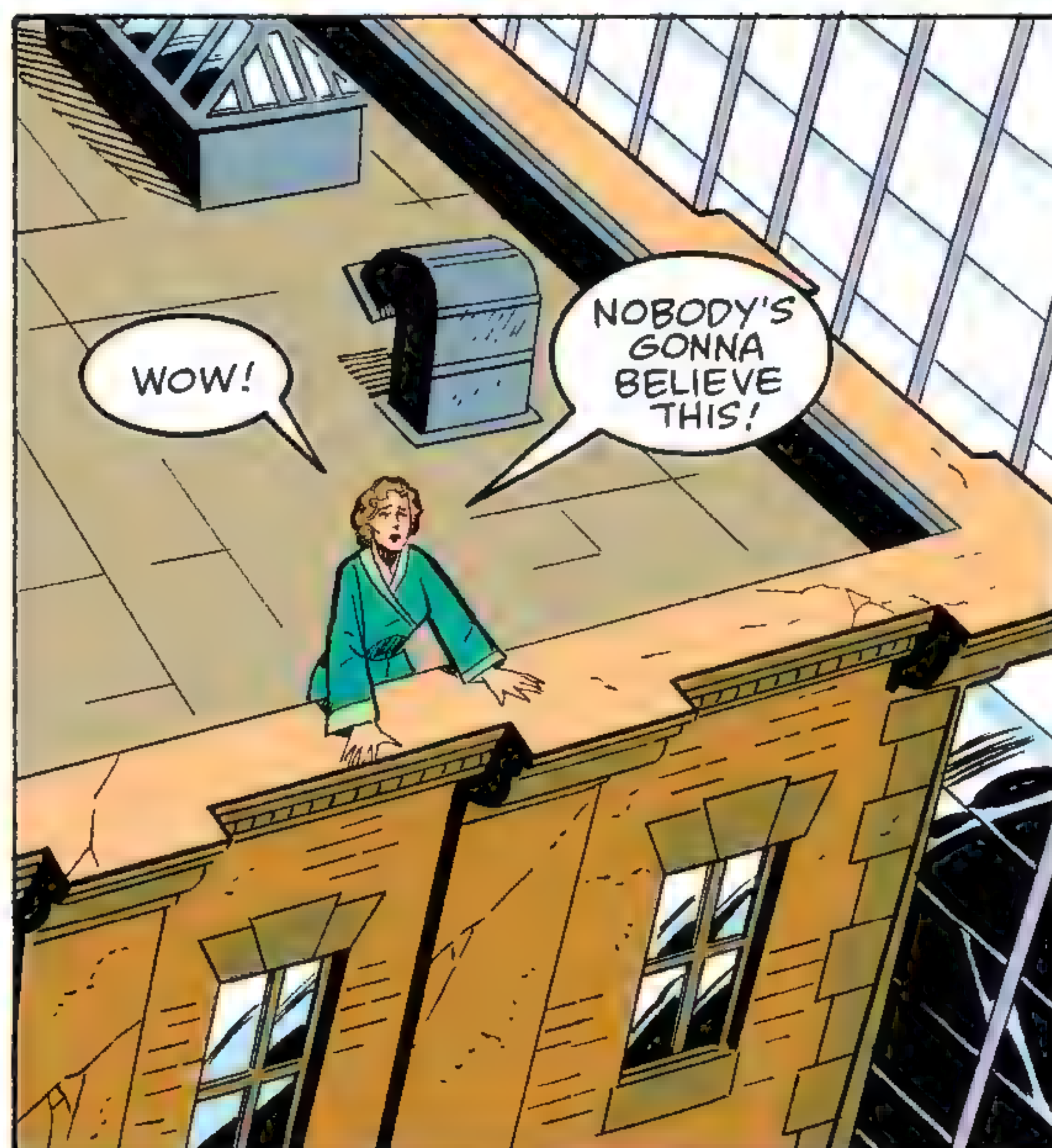
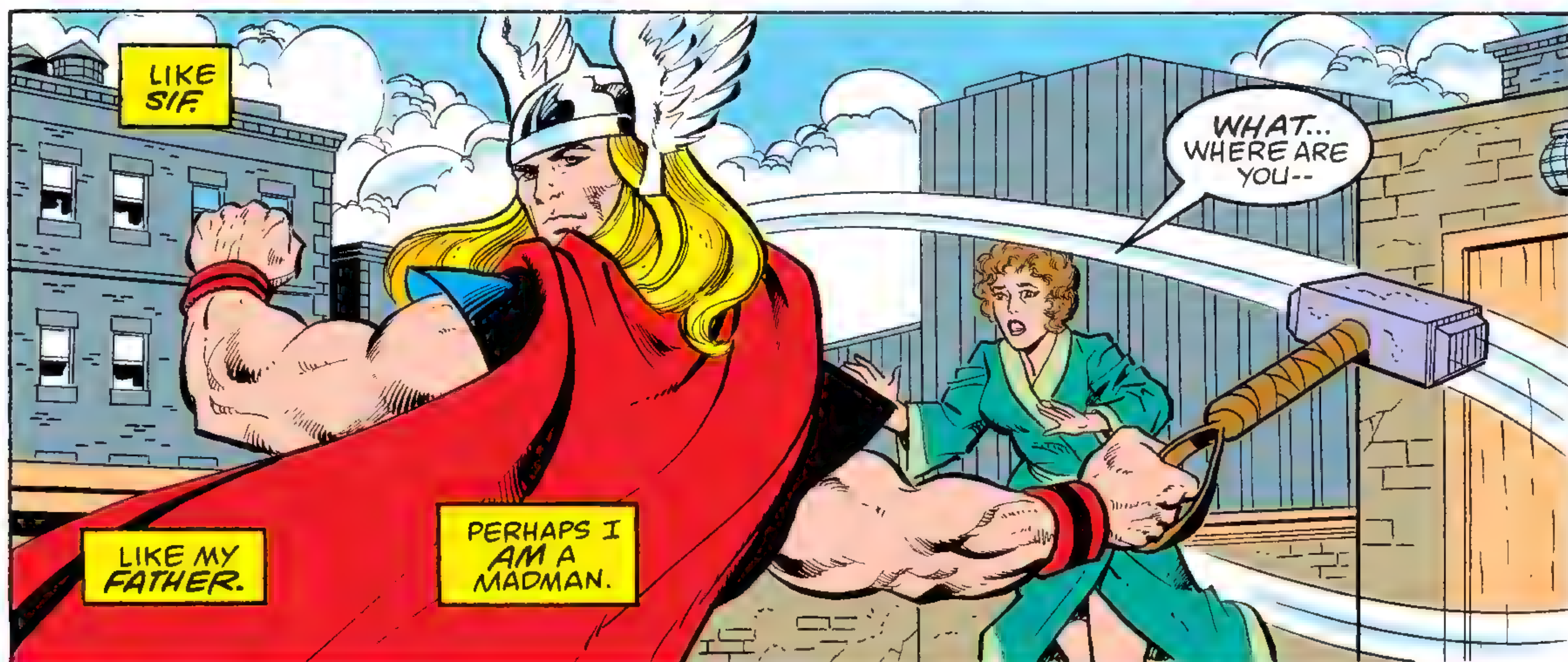
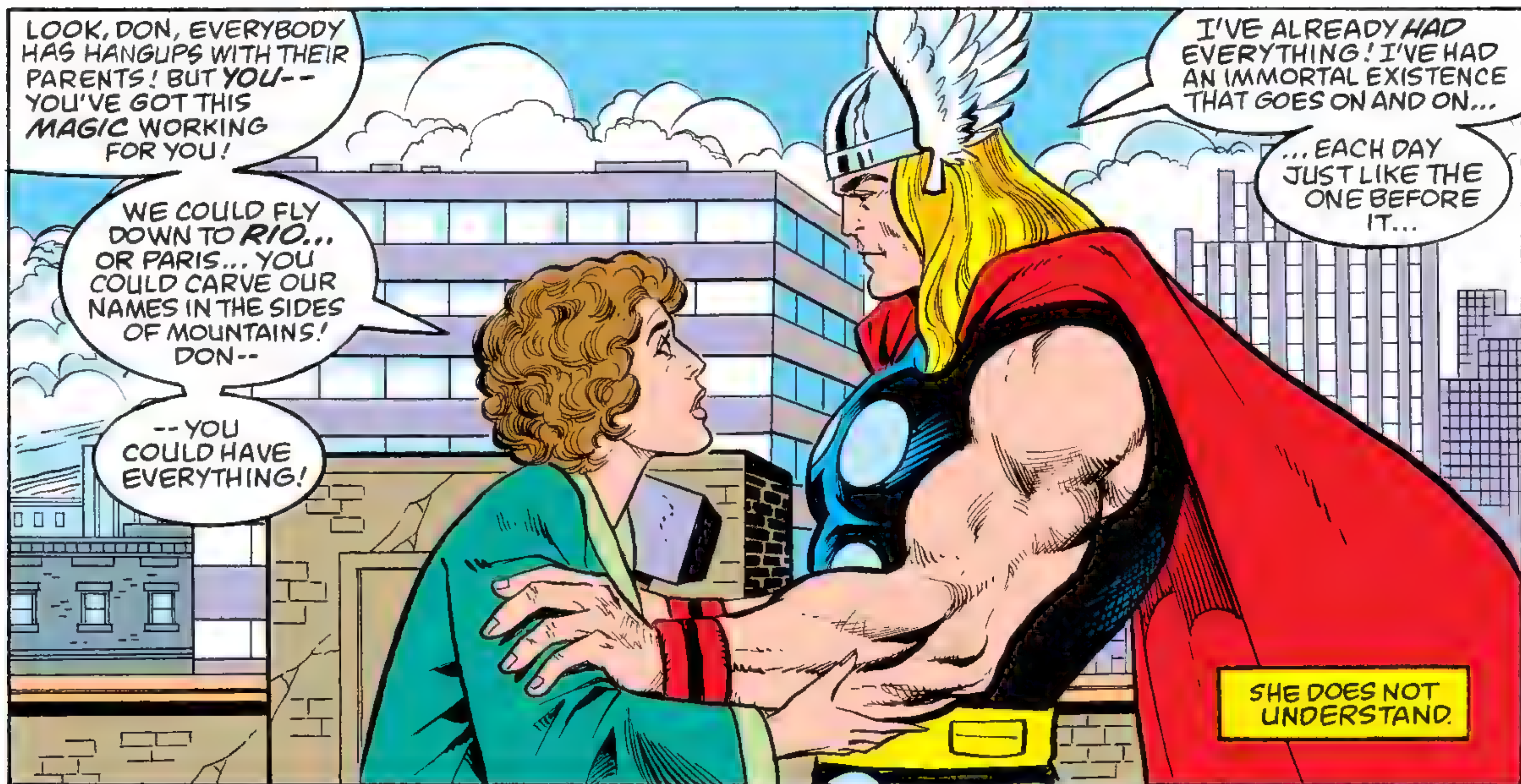


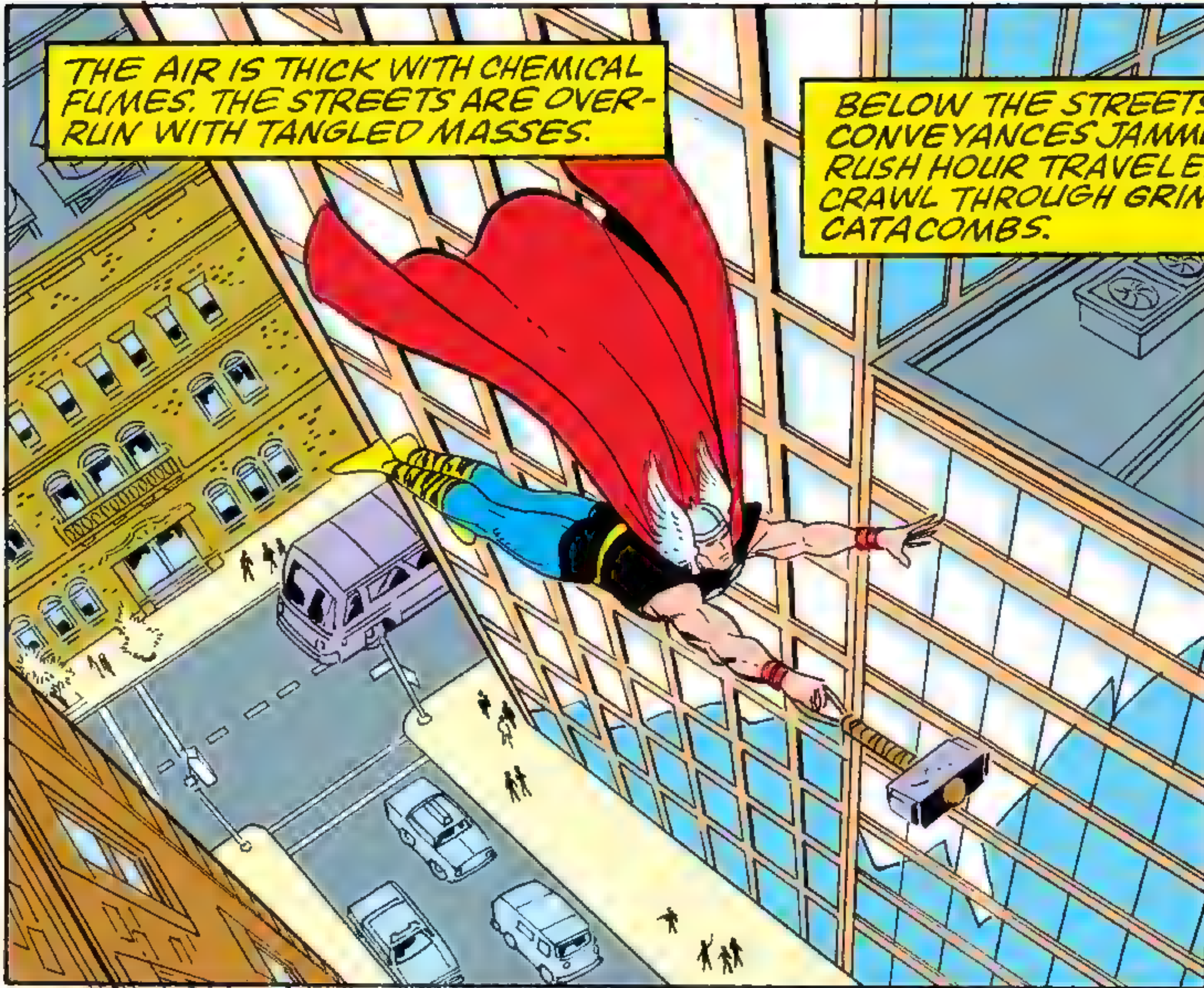












THE AIR IS THICK WITH CHEMICAL FUMES. THE STREETS ARE OVER-RUN WITH TANGLED MASSES.

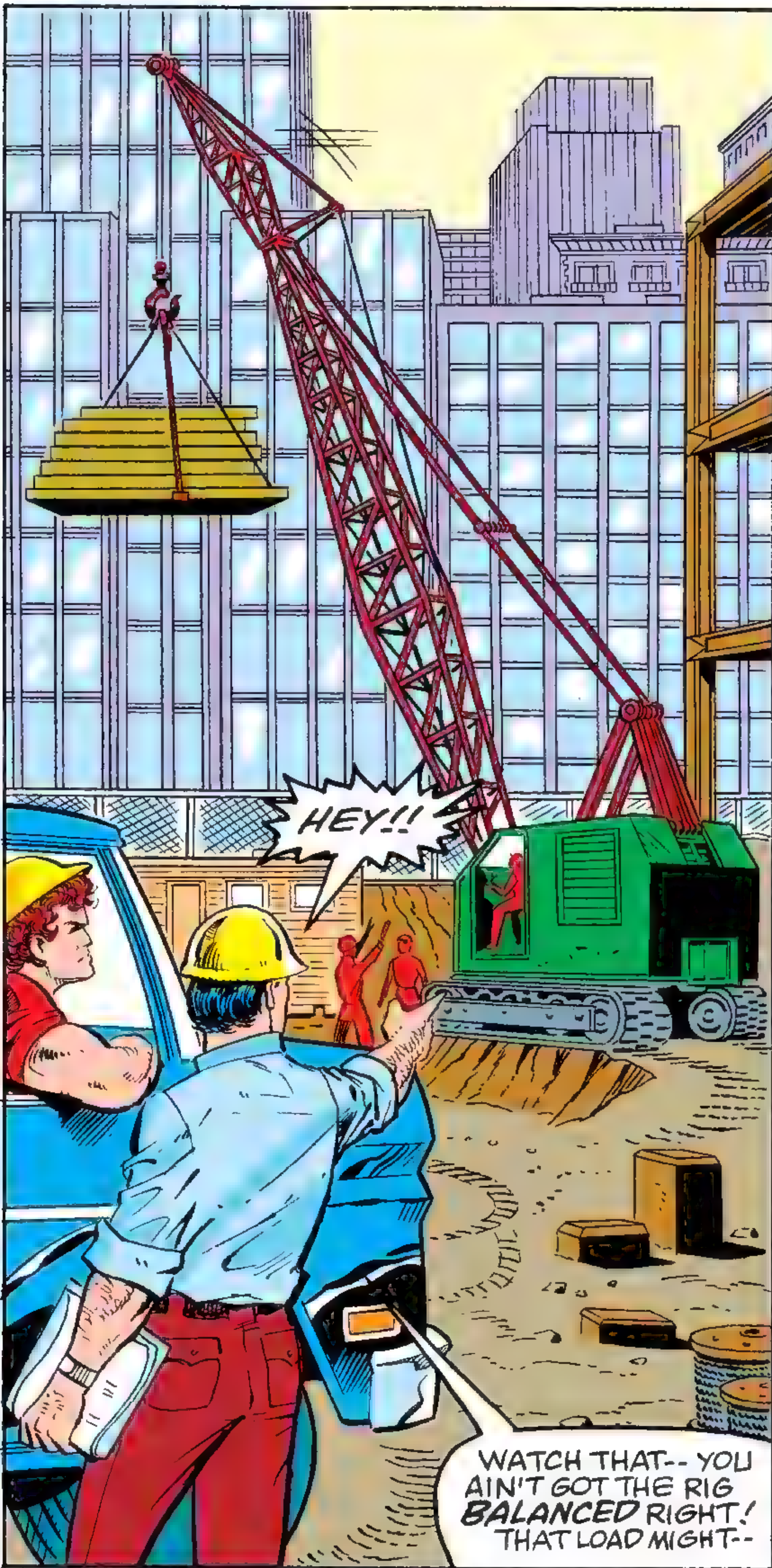
BELOW THE STREETS, HUGE CONVEYANCES JAMMED WITH RUSH HOUR TRAVELERS CRAWL THROUGH GRIMY CATACOMBS.



ABOVE ME, COMMERCIAL AIR CARRIERS CIRCLE INTO APPROACH LANES TO LAGUARDIA.

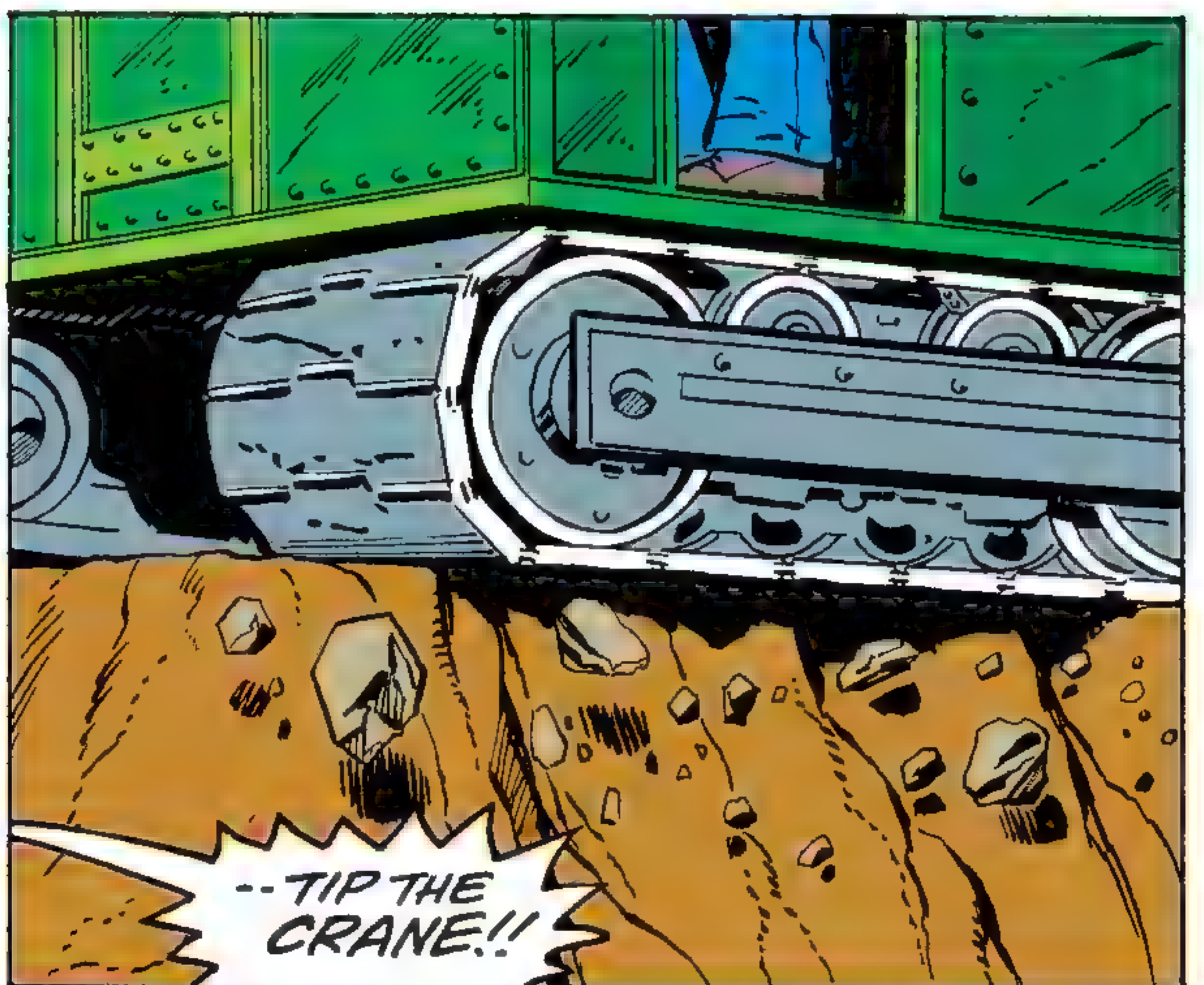
SOMEWHERE, A CHILD CRIES.

I FEEL NOTHING.

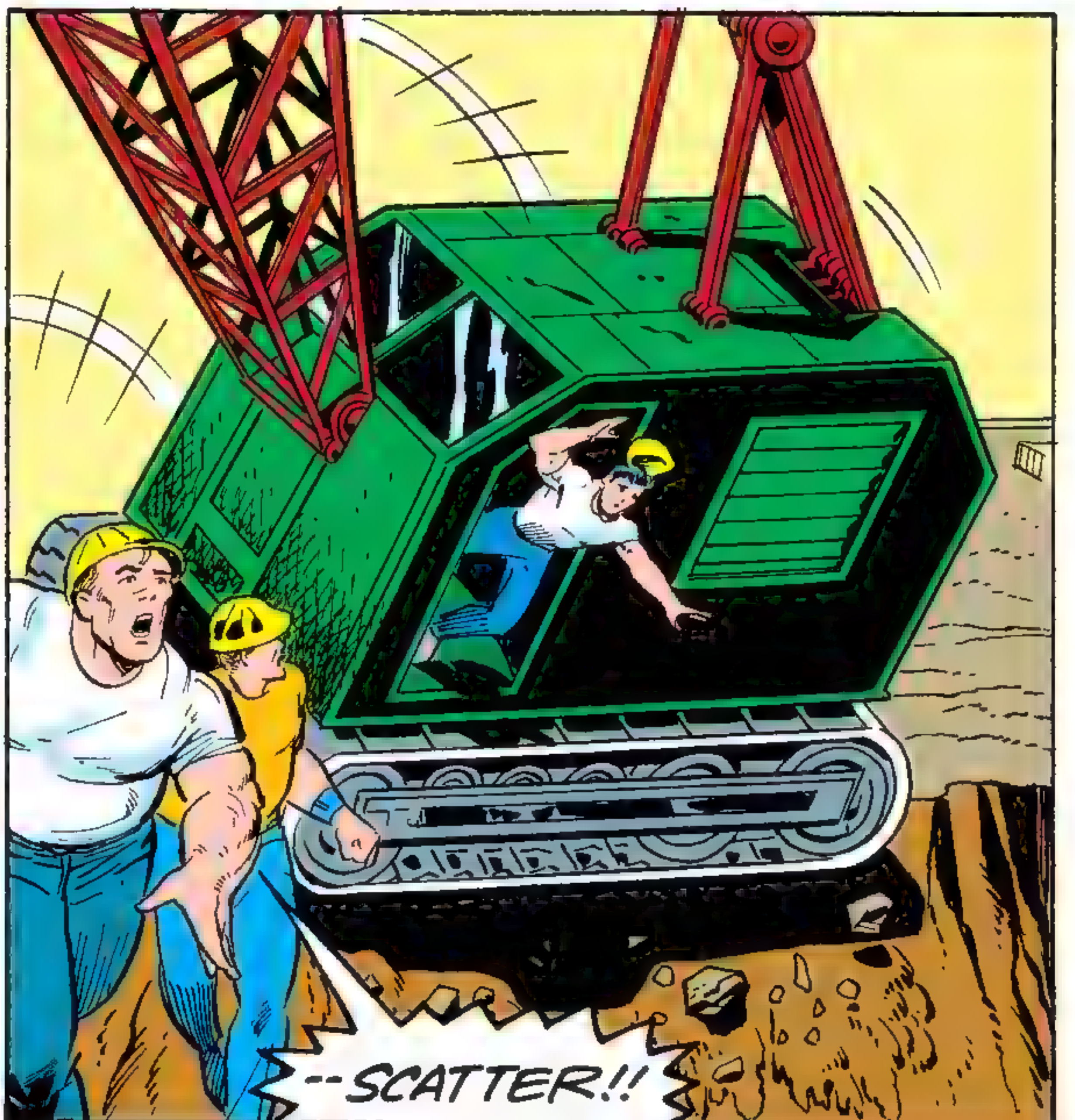


HEY!!

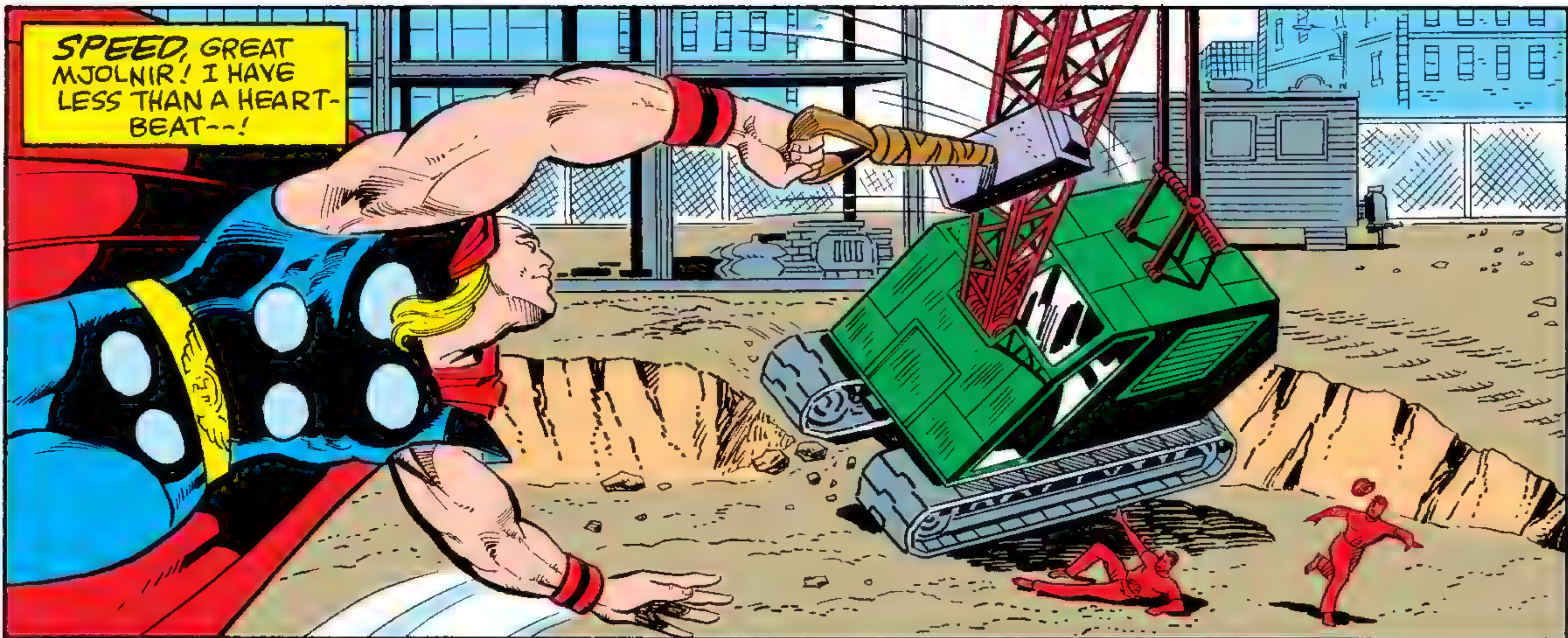
WATCH THAT-- YOU AIN'T GOT THE RIG BALANCED RIGHT! THAT LOAD MIGHT--



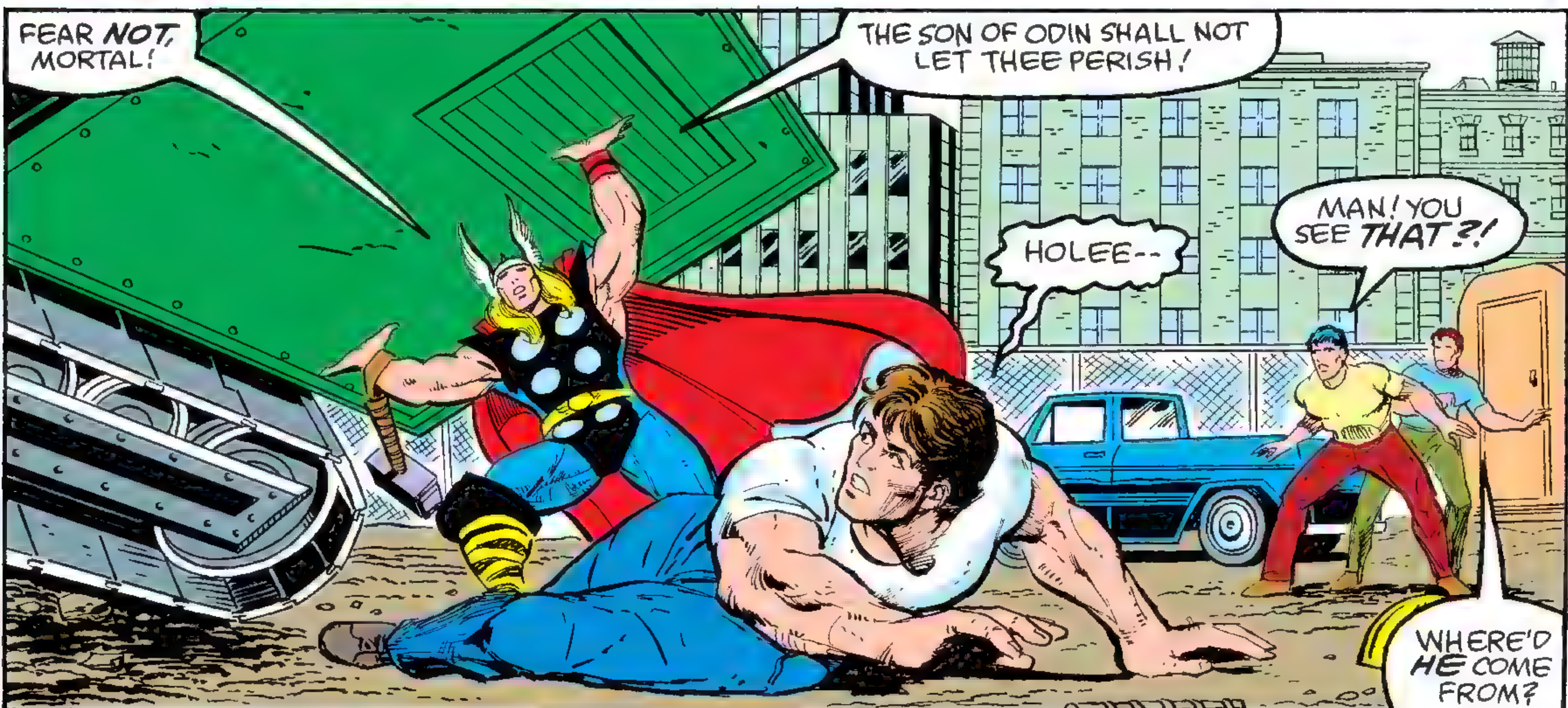
-- TIP THE CRANE!!



-- SCATTER!!



SPEED, GREAT
MJOLNIR! I HAVE
LESS THAN A HEART-
BEAT--!



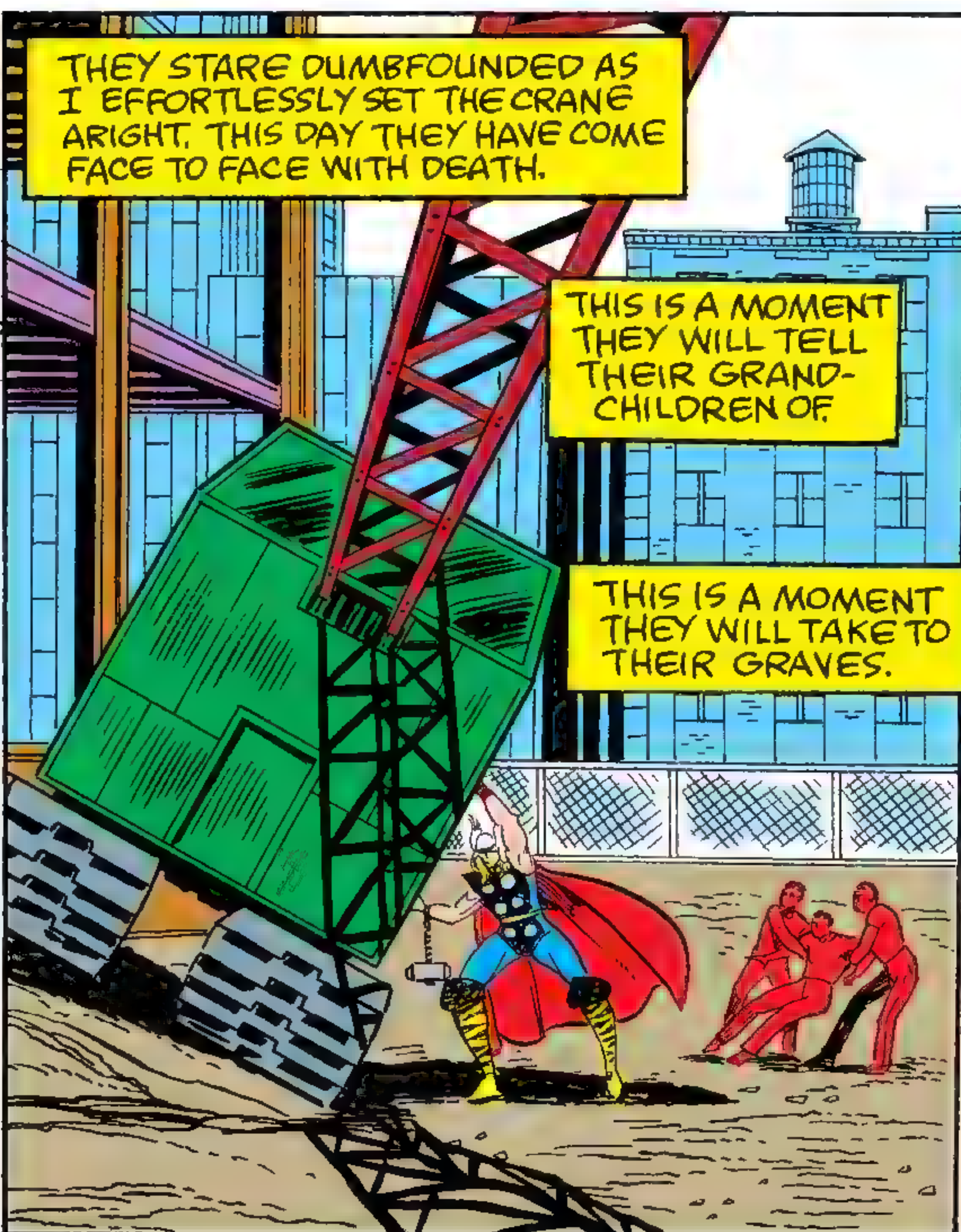
FEAR NOT,
MORTAL!

THE SON OF ODIN SHALL NOT
LET THEE PERISH!

HOLEE--

MAN! YOU
SEE THAT?!

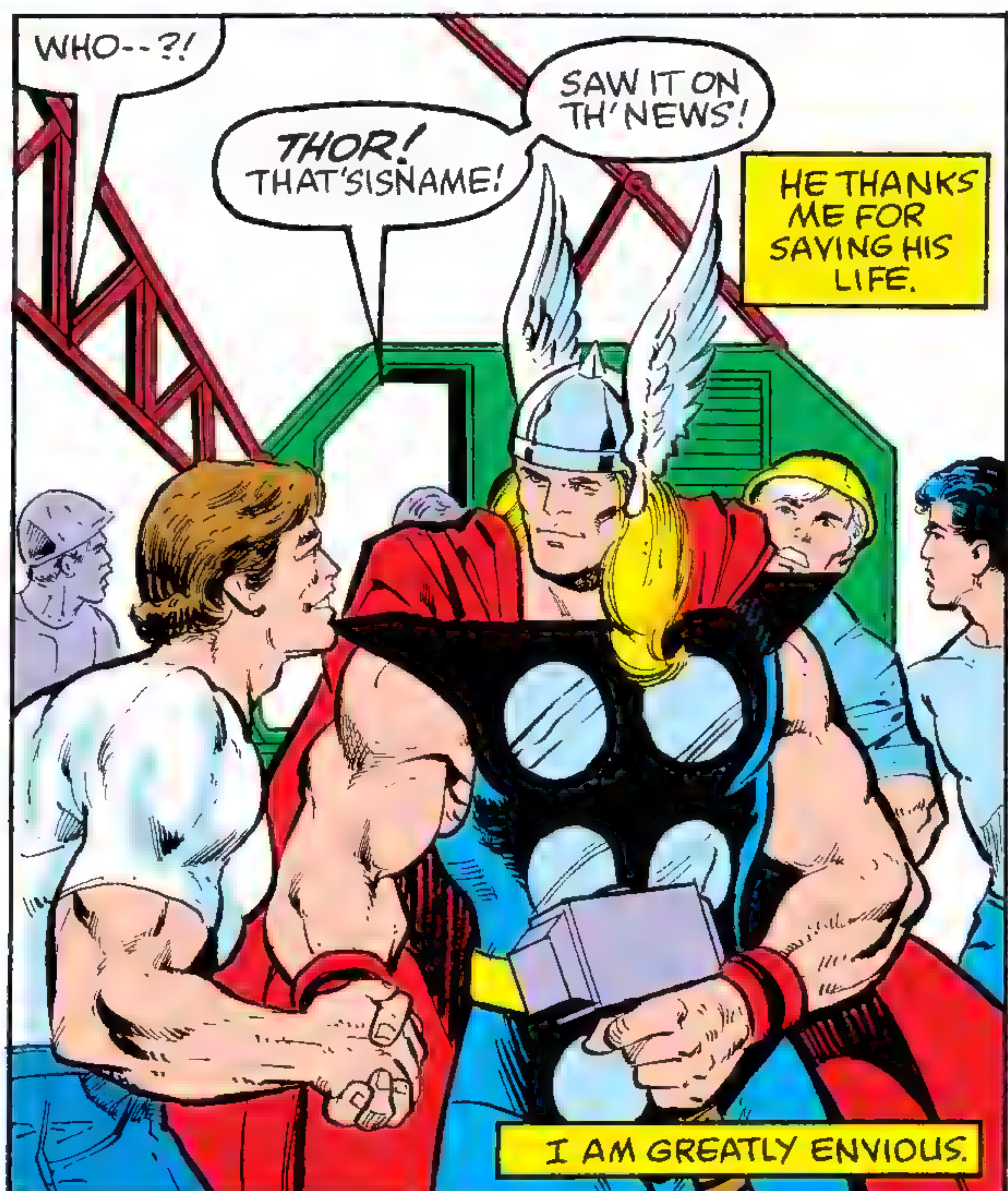
WHERE'D
HE COME
FROM?



THEY STARE DUMBFOUNDED AS
I EFFORTLESSLY SET THE CRANE
ARIGHT. THIS DAY THEY HAVE COME
FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH.

THIS IS A MOMENT
THEY WILL TELL
THEIR GRAND-
CHILDREN OF

THIS IS A MOMENT
THEY WILL TAKE TO
THEIR GRAVES.



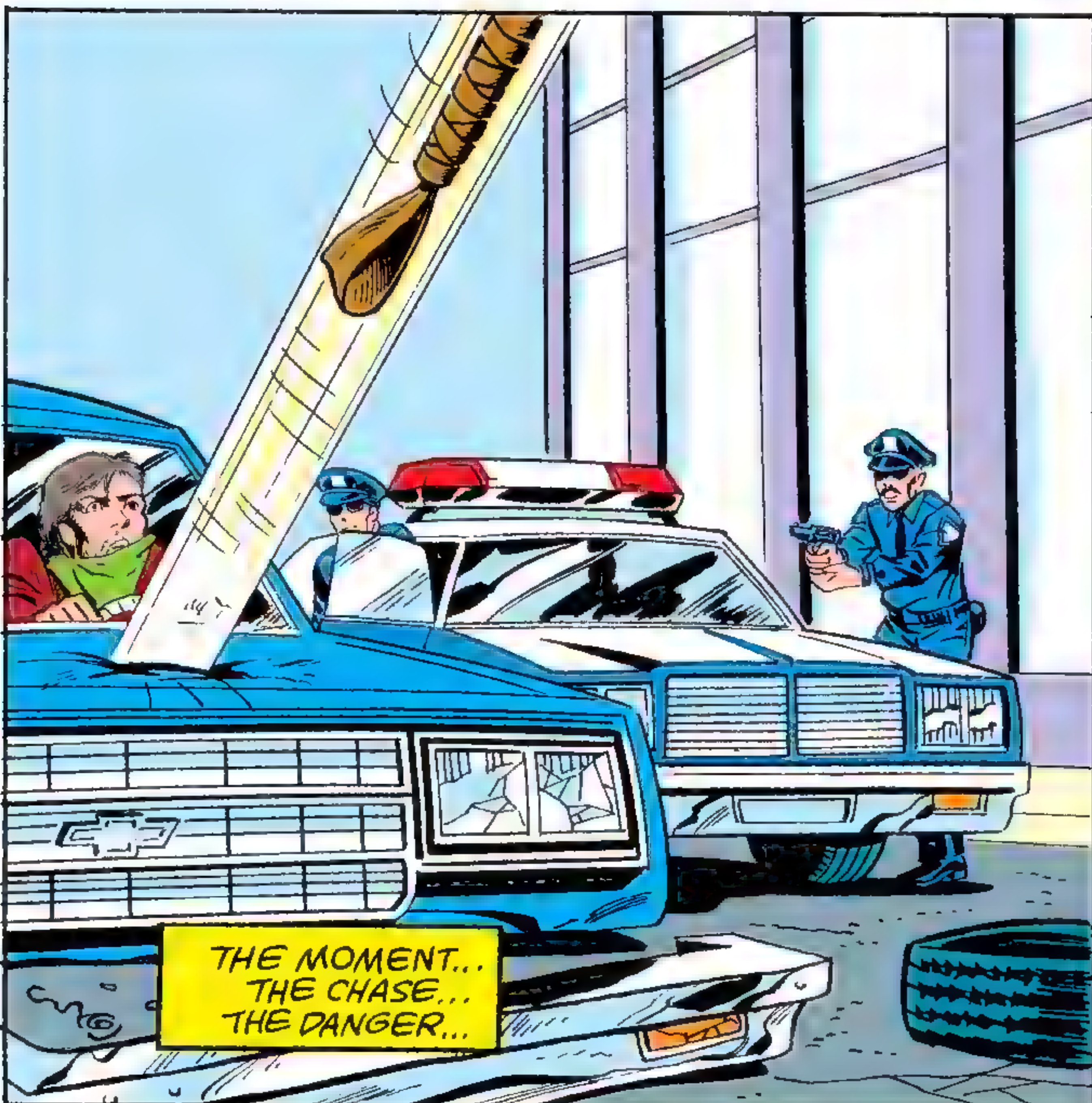
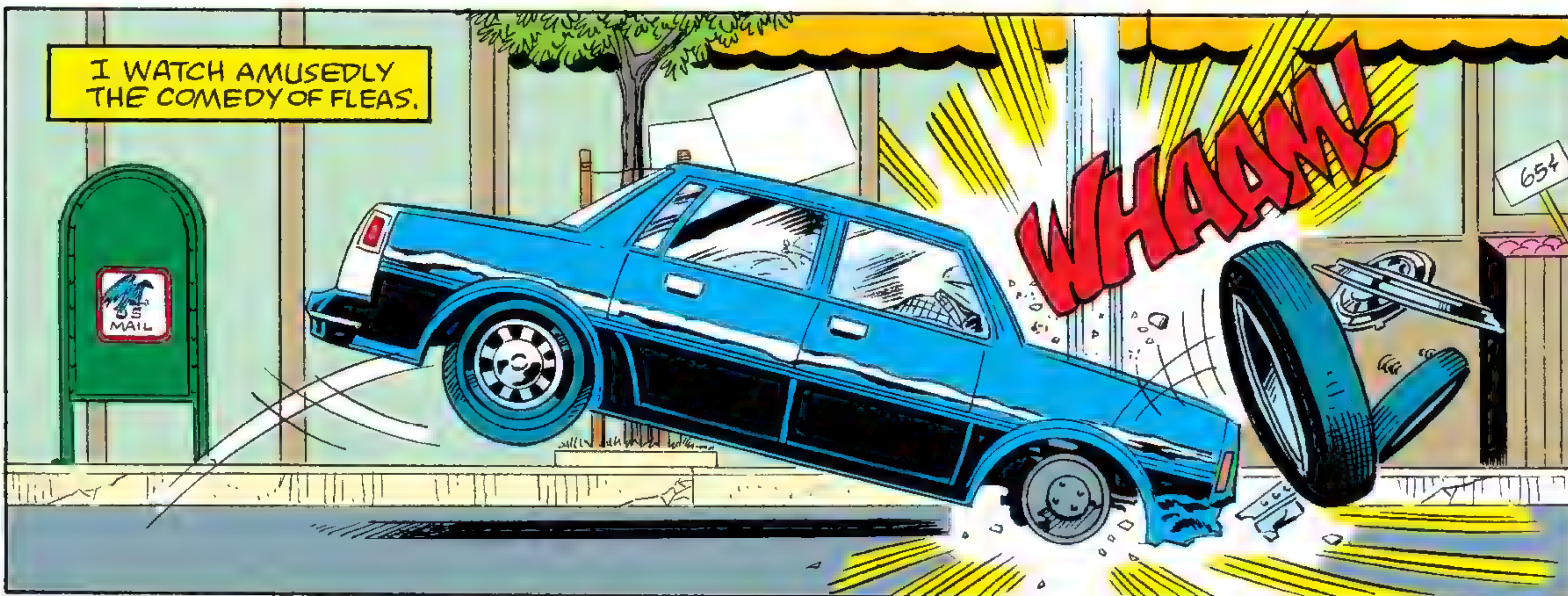
WHO--?!

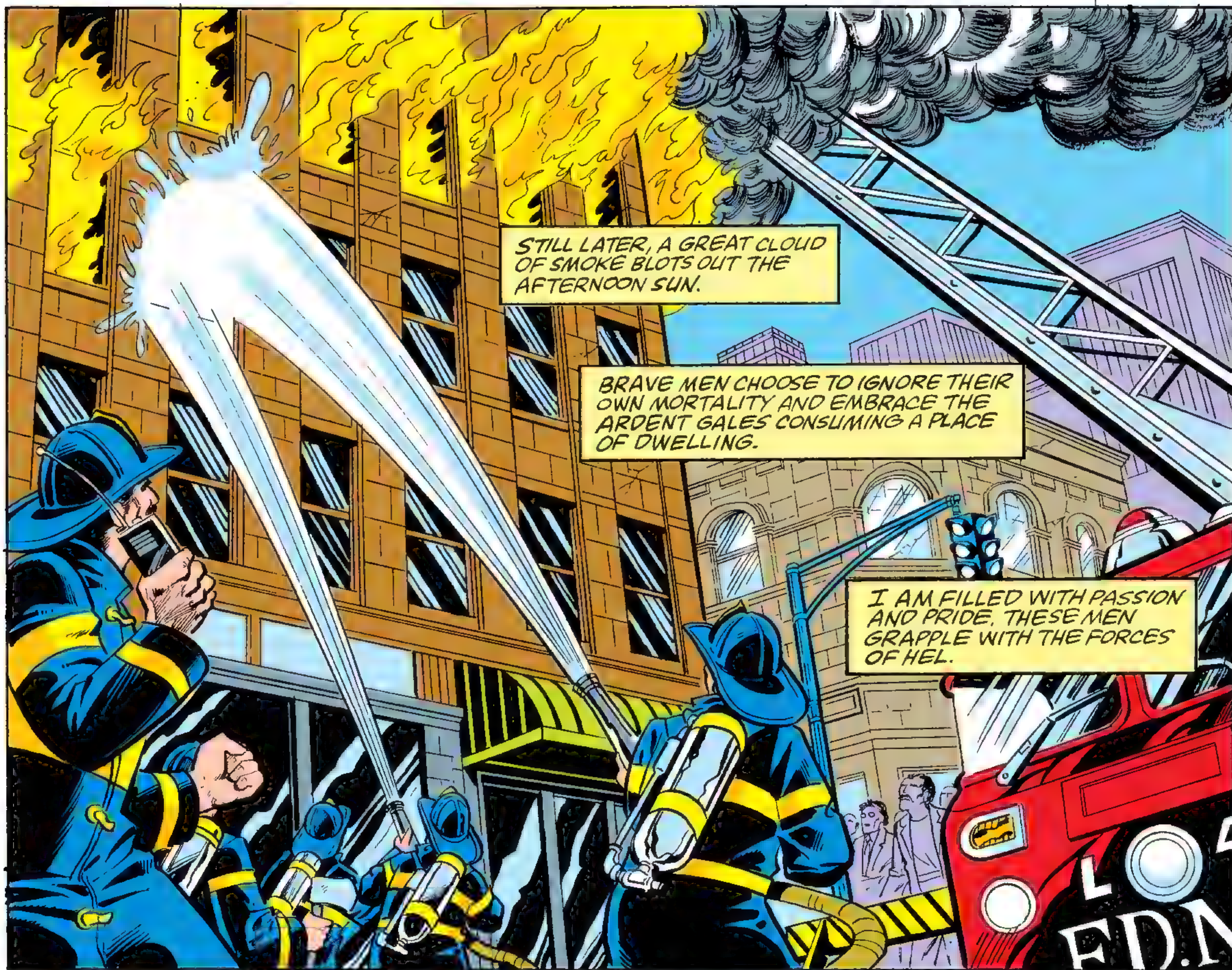
THOR!
THAT'S HIS NAME!

SAW IT ON
TH' NEWS!

HE THANKS
ME FOR
SAVING HIS
LIFE.

I AM GREATLY ENVIOUS.





STILL LATER, A GREAT CLOUD OF SMOKE BLOTS OUT THE AFTERNOON SUN.

BRAVE MEN CHOOSE TO IGNORE THEIR OWN MORTALITY AND EMBRACE THE ARDENT GALES CONSUMING A PLACE OF DWELLING.

I AM FILLED WITH PASSION AND PRIDE. THESE MEN GRAPPLE WITH THE FORCES OF HEL.



I MUST BATTLE DEATH WITH THEM.

HAIL, O COMMANDER!

HOW SHALL THE SON OF ODIN AID THEE IN THY STRUGGLE?



BEAT IT.

TAKE YOUR TIGHTS AND YOUR POINTY HAT AND GET BACK BEHIND THE POLICE BARRIER, OR, I SWEAR TO MOSES...

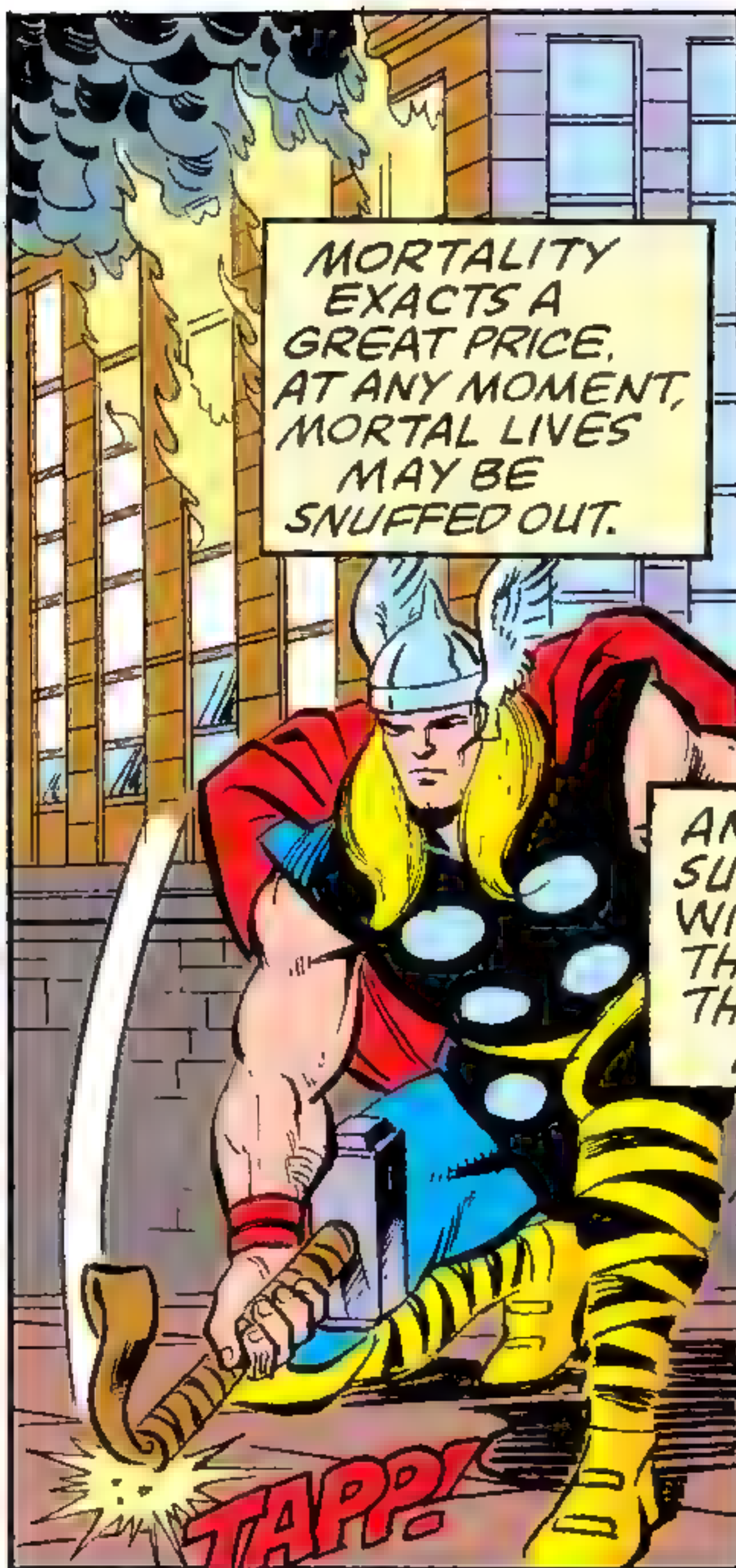
...I'LL HAVE YOU LOCKED UP!!

THEY ARE MY OWN, AND YET THEY REJECT ME.



THEY DO NOT TRUST WHAT THEY CANNOT EXPLAIN.

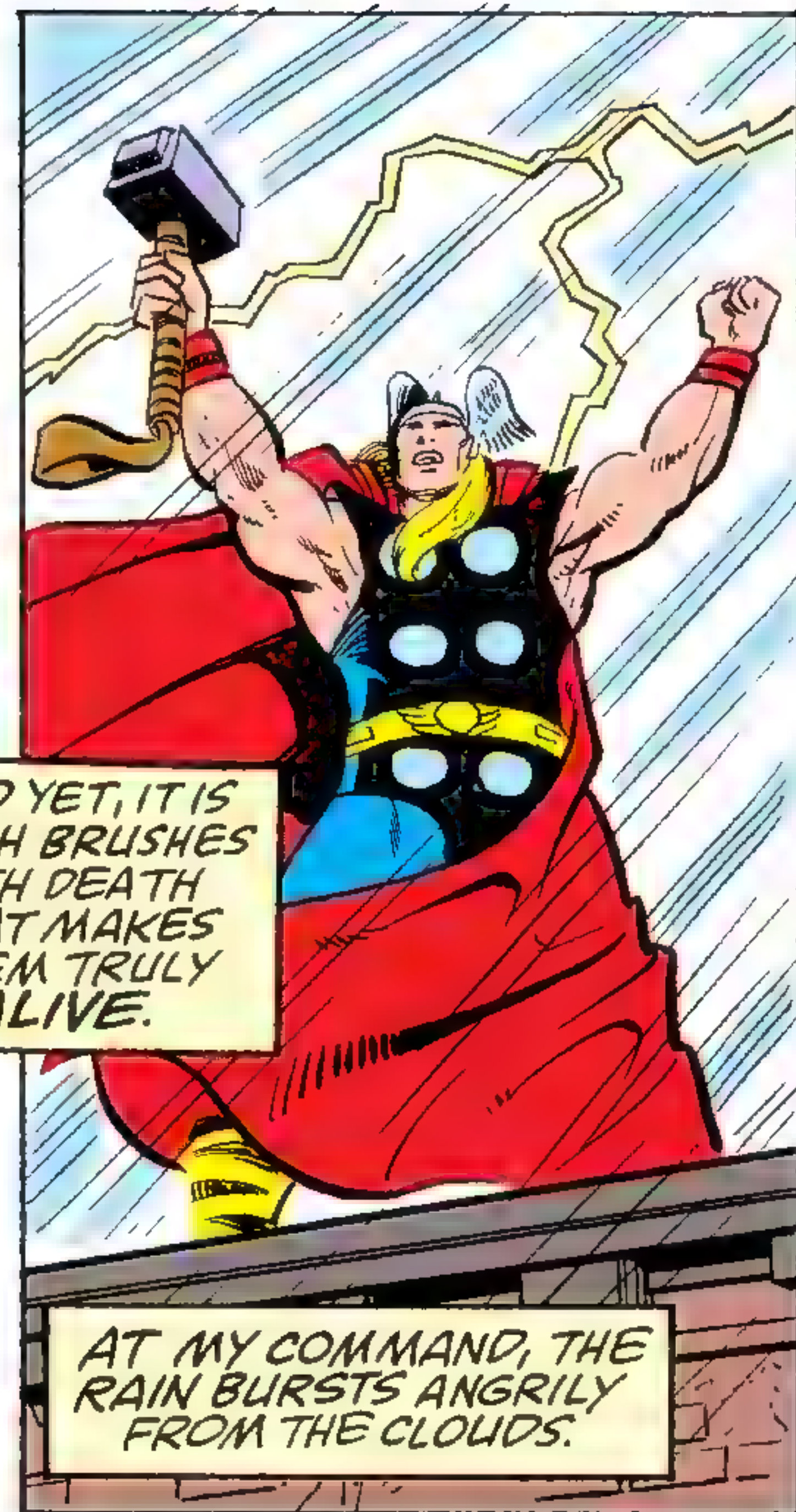
HE... FLIES--?!



MORTALITY EXACTS A GREAT PRICE. AT ANY MOMENT, MORTAL LIVES MAY BE SNUFFED OUT.

AND YET, IT IS SUCH BRUSHES WITH DEATH THAT MAKES THEM TRULY ALIVE.

TAPP!

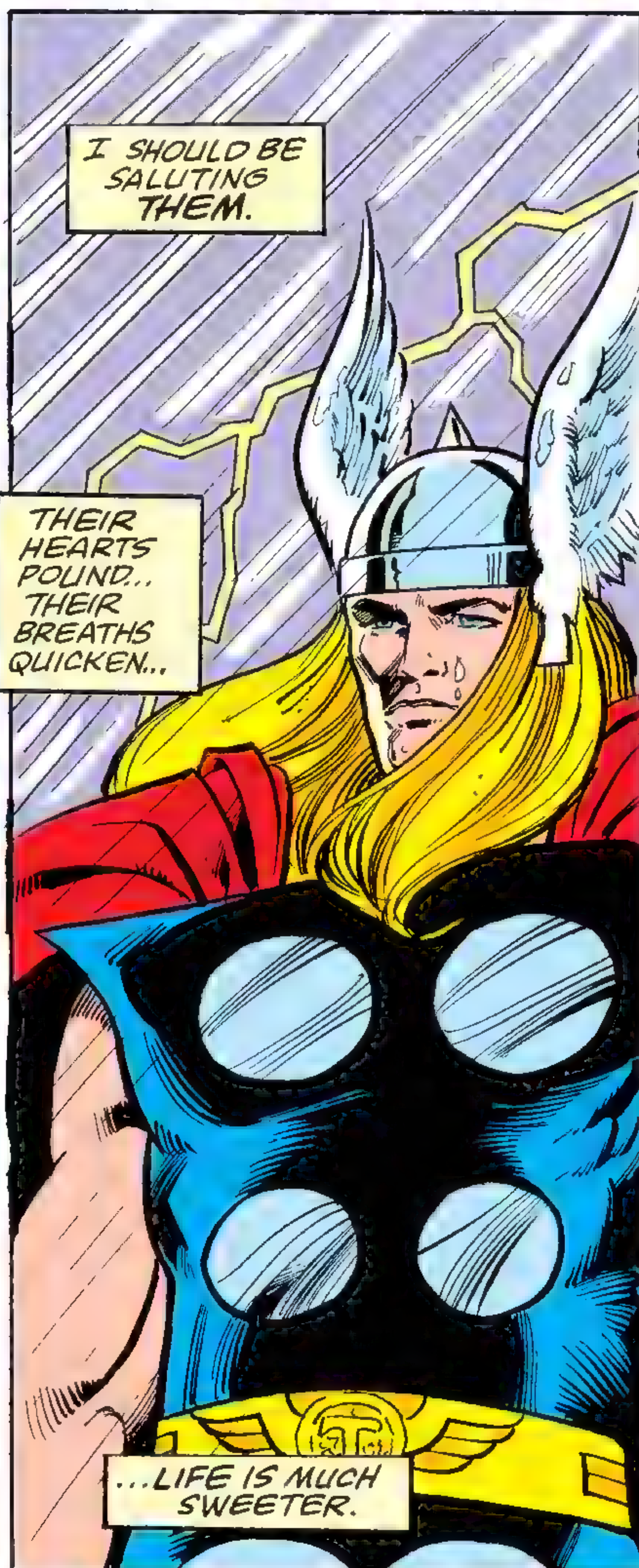


AT MY COMMAND, THE RAIN BURSTS ANGRILY FROM THE CLOUDS.



THE FIRE IS RAPIDLY EXTINGUISHED.

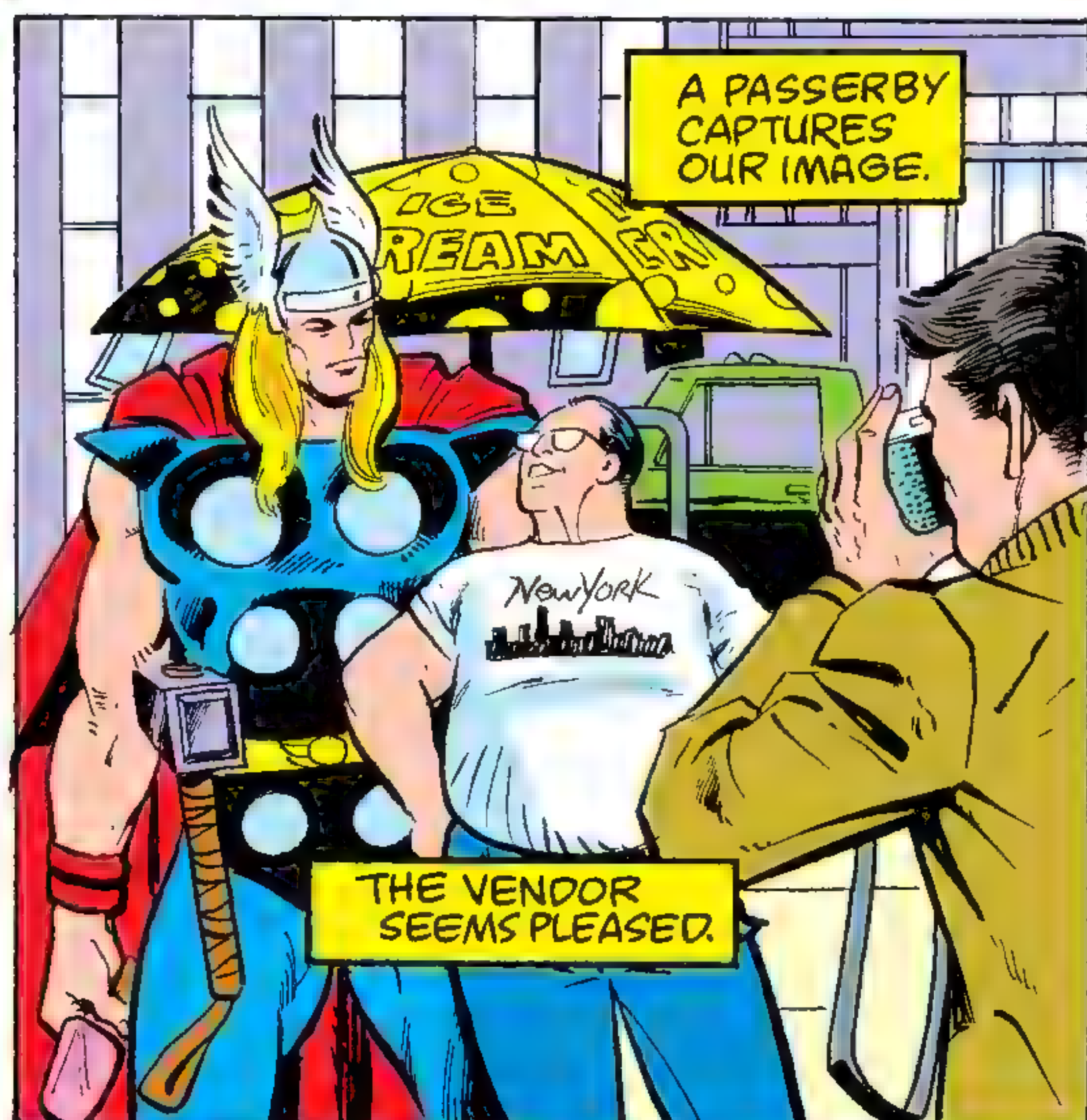
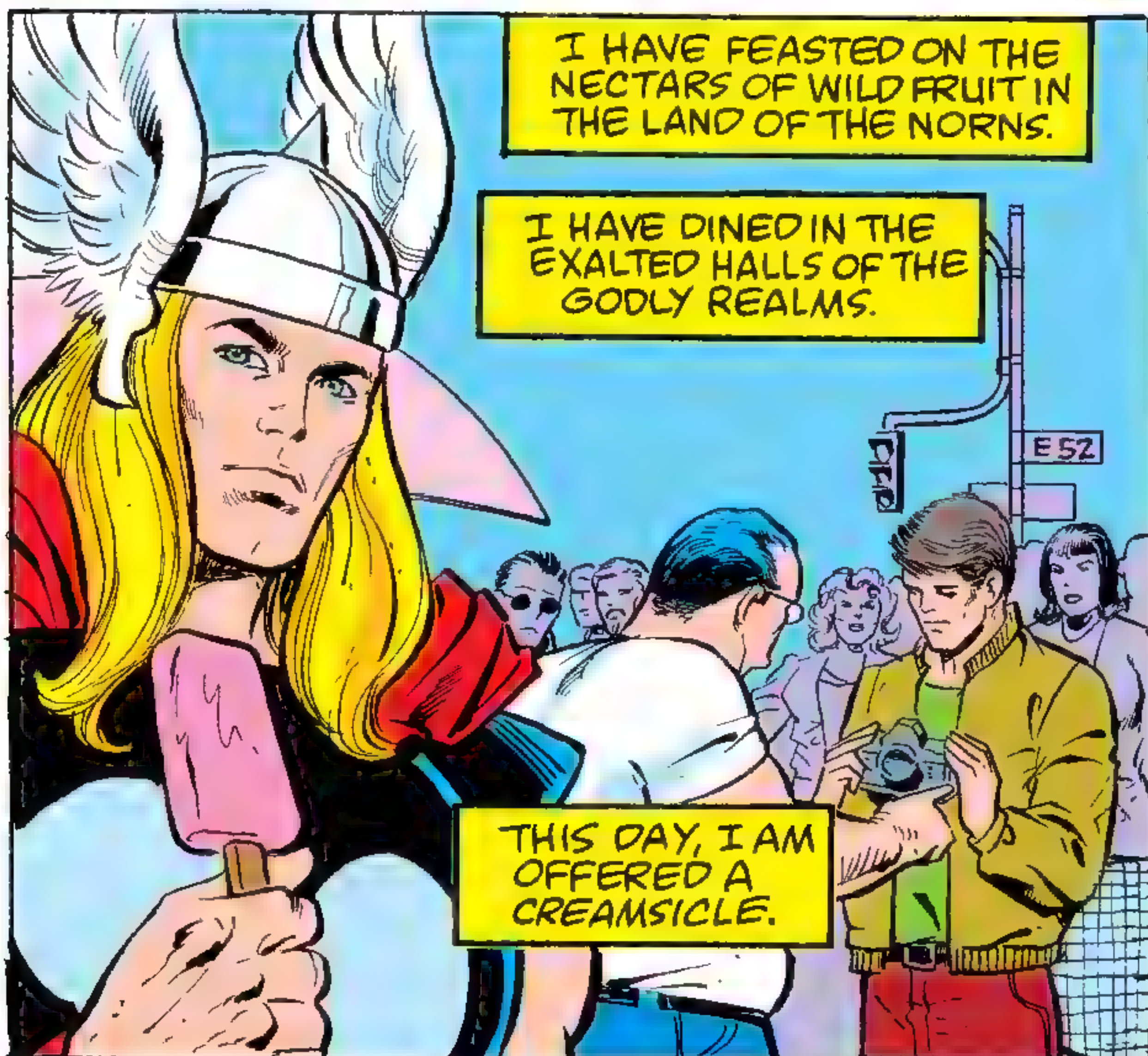
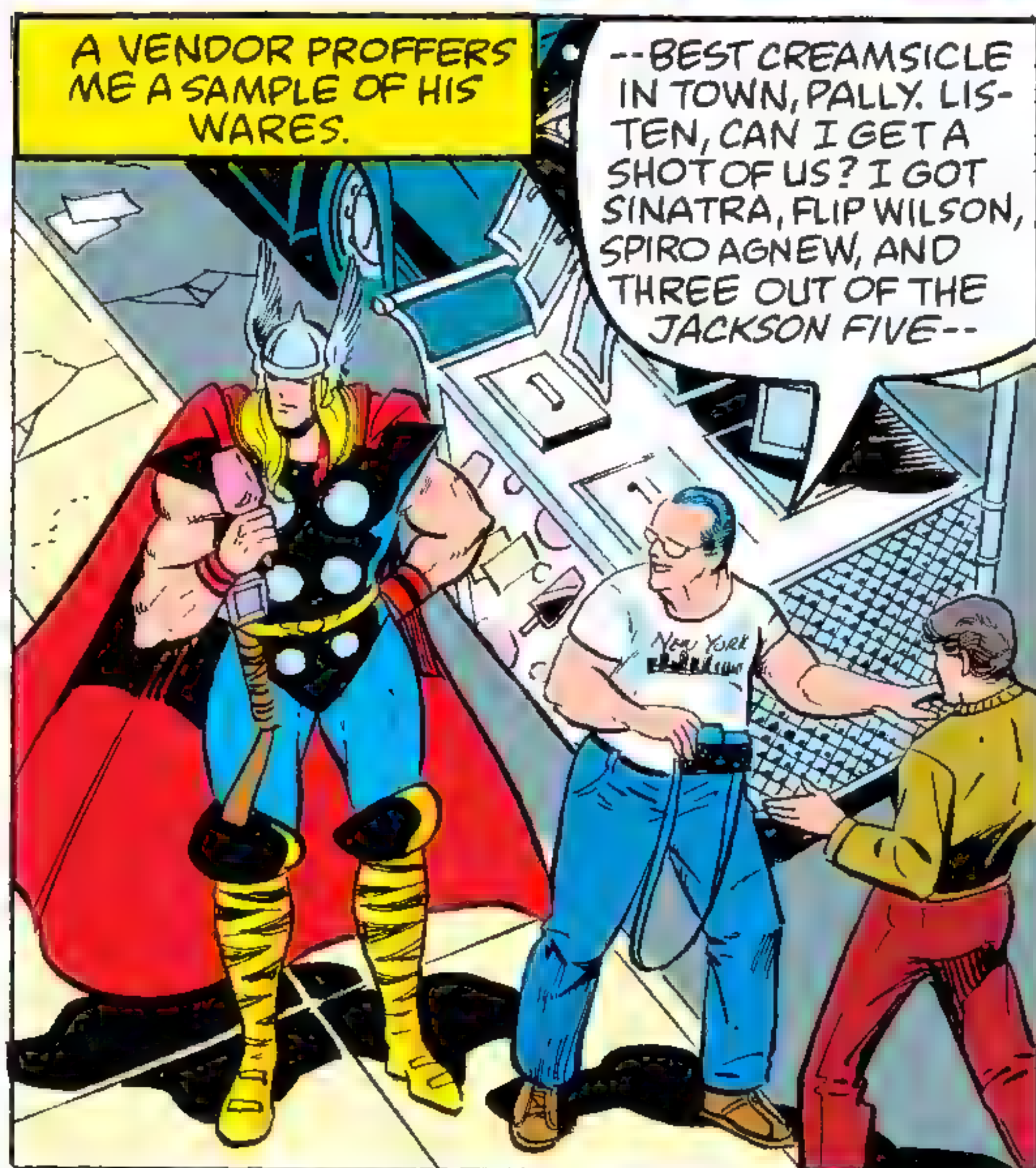
THE FIREMEN OFFER A WARY SALUTE.

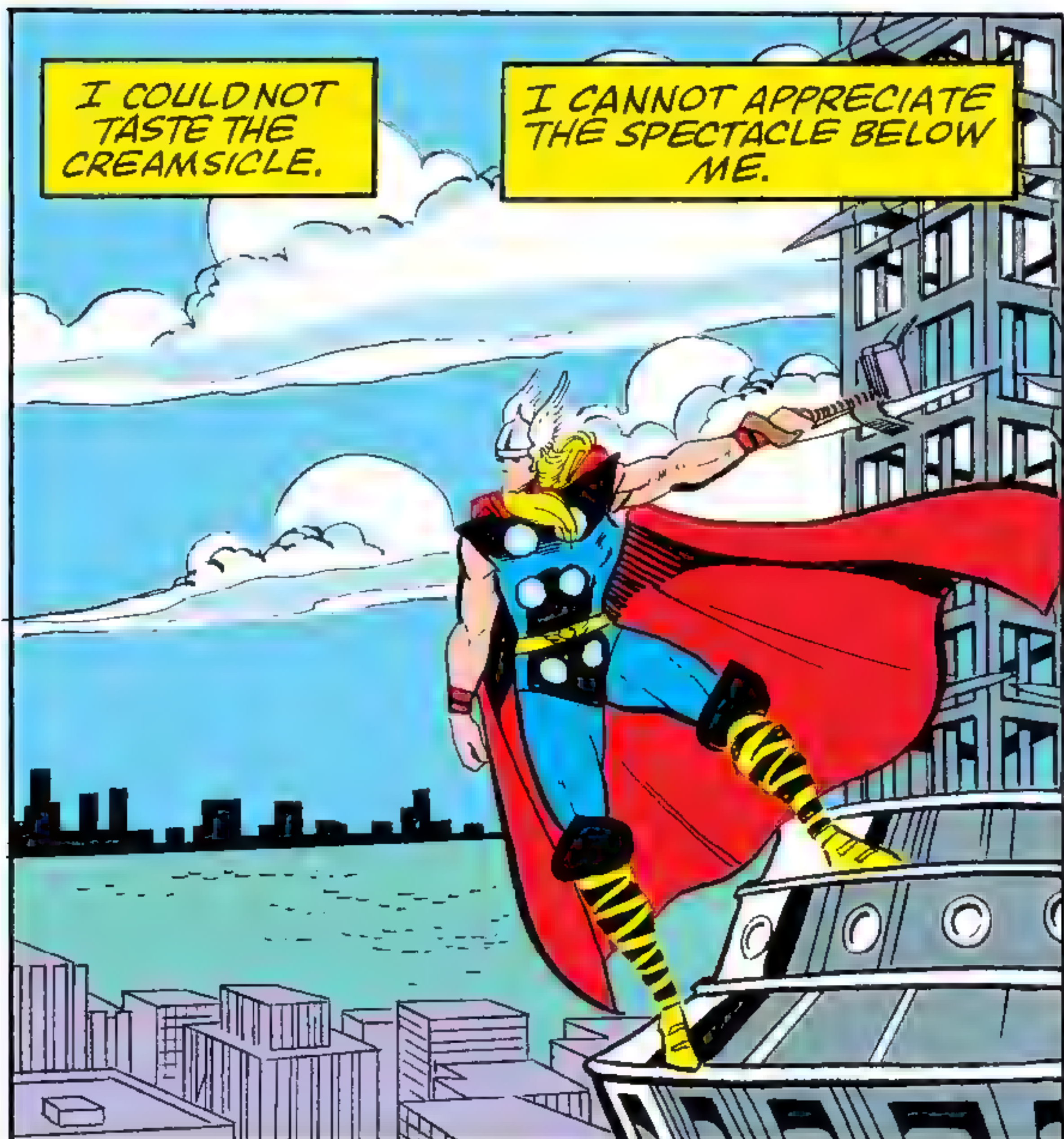
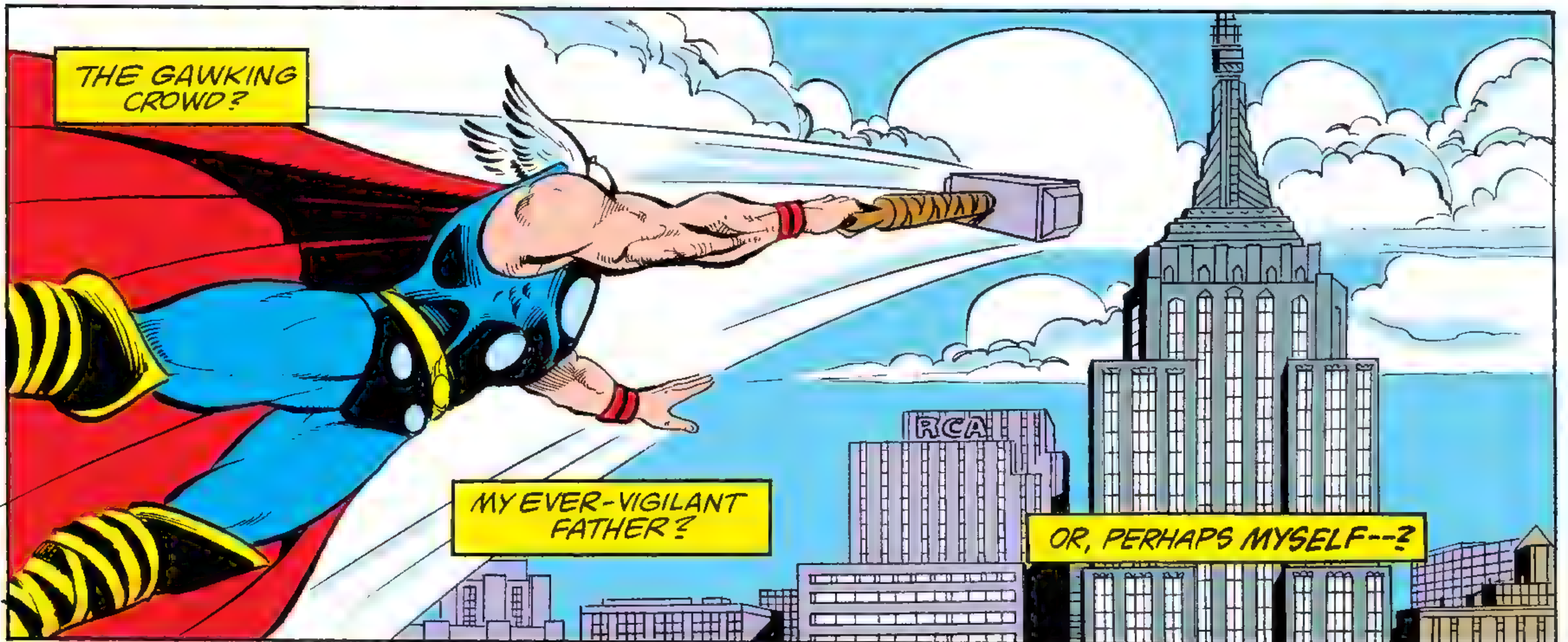


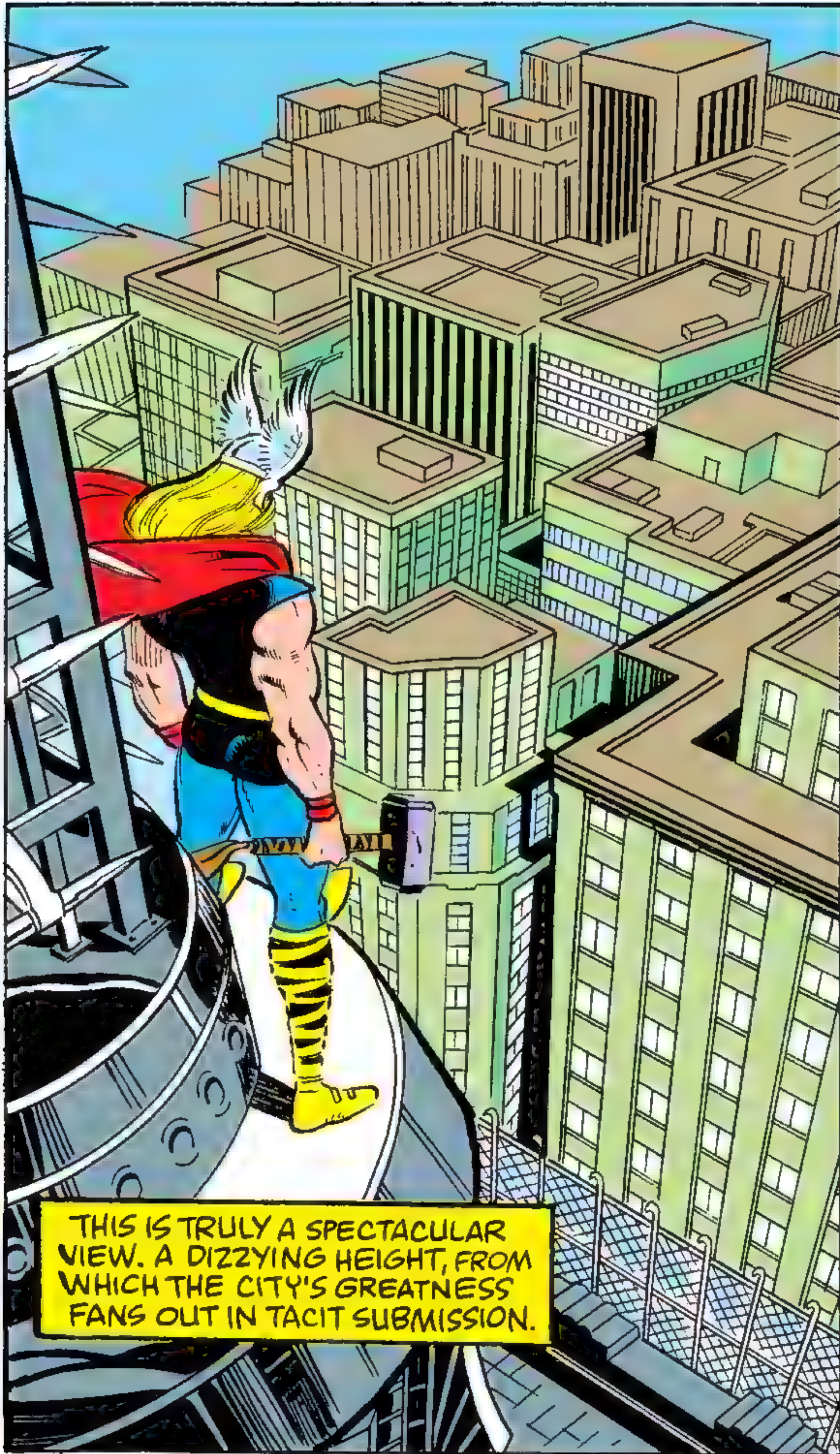
I SHOULD BE SALUTING THEM.

THEIR HEARTS POUND... THEIR BREATHS QUICKEN...

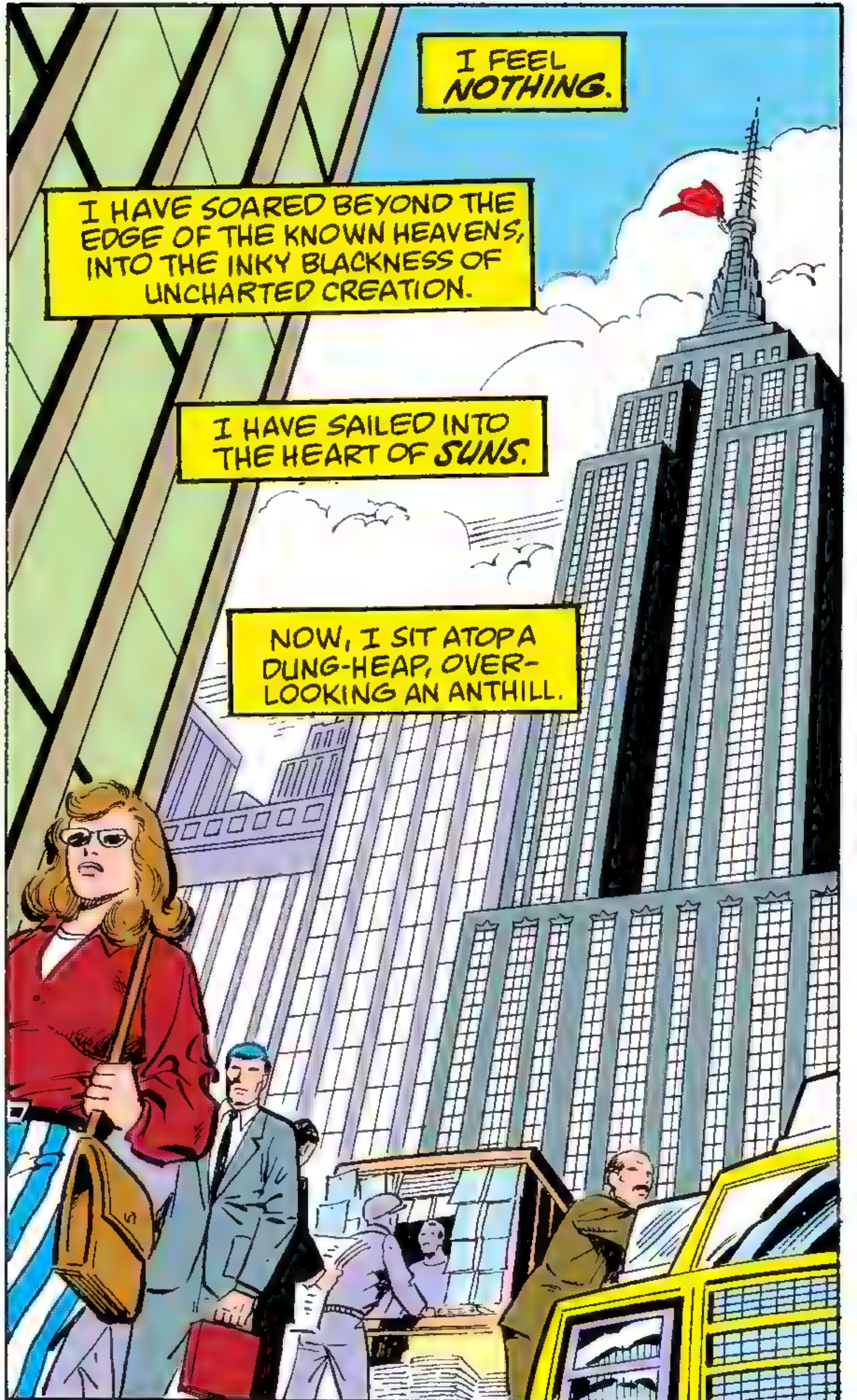
...LIFE IS MUCH SWEETER.







THIS IS TRULY A SPECTACULAR VIEW. A DIZZYING HEIGHT, FROM WHICH THE CITY'S GREATNESS FANS OUT IN TACIT SUBMISSION.

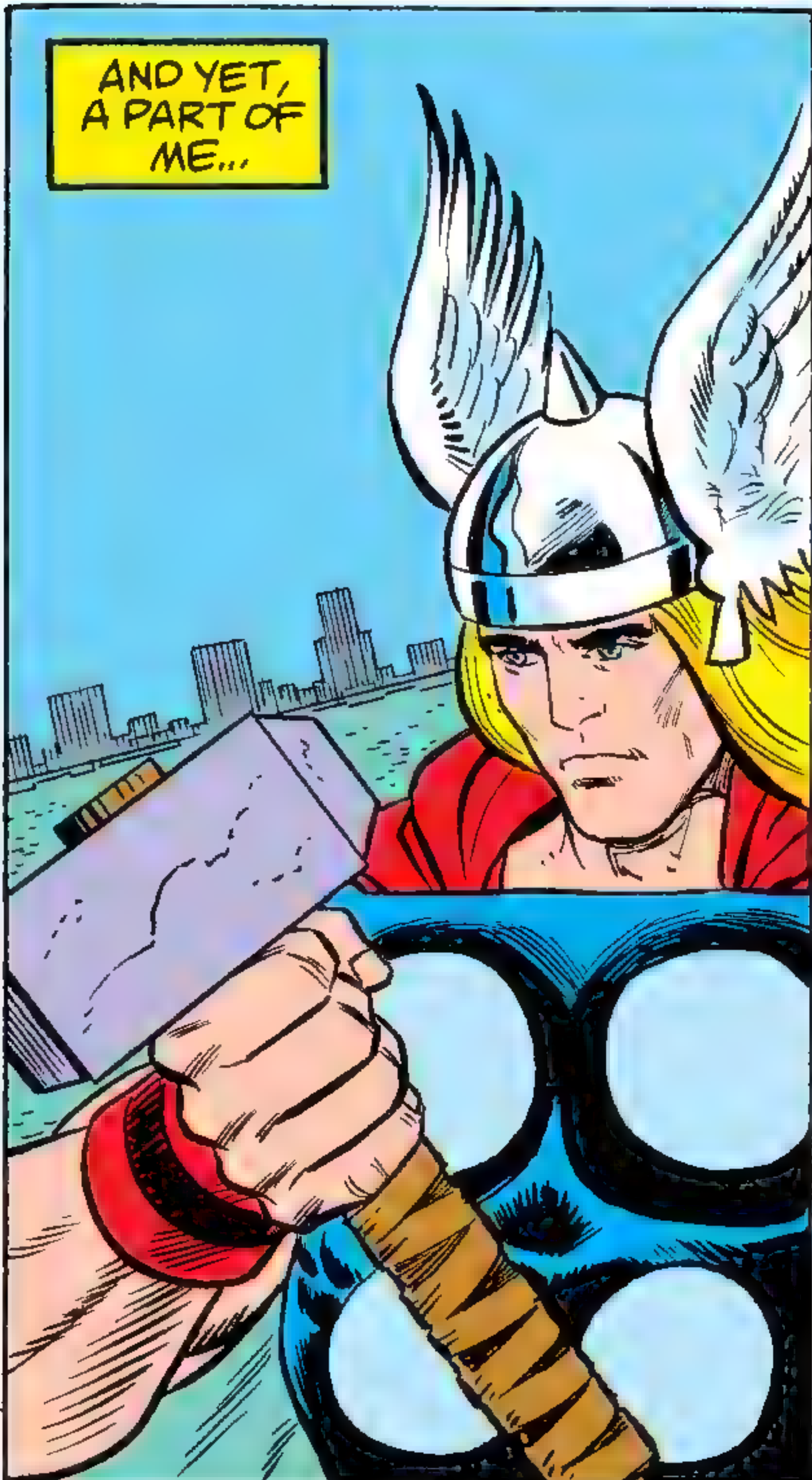


I FEEL NOTHING.

I HAVE SOARED BEYOND THE EDGE OF THE KNOWN HEAVENS, INTO THE INKY BLACKNESS OF UNCHARTED CREATION.

I HAVE SAILED INTO THE HEART OF SUNS.

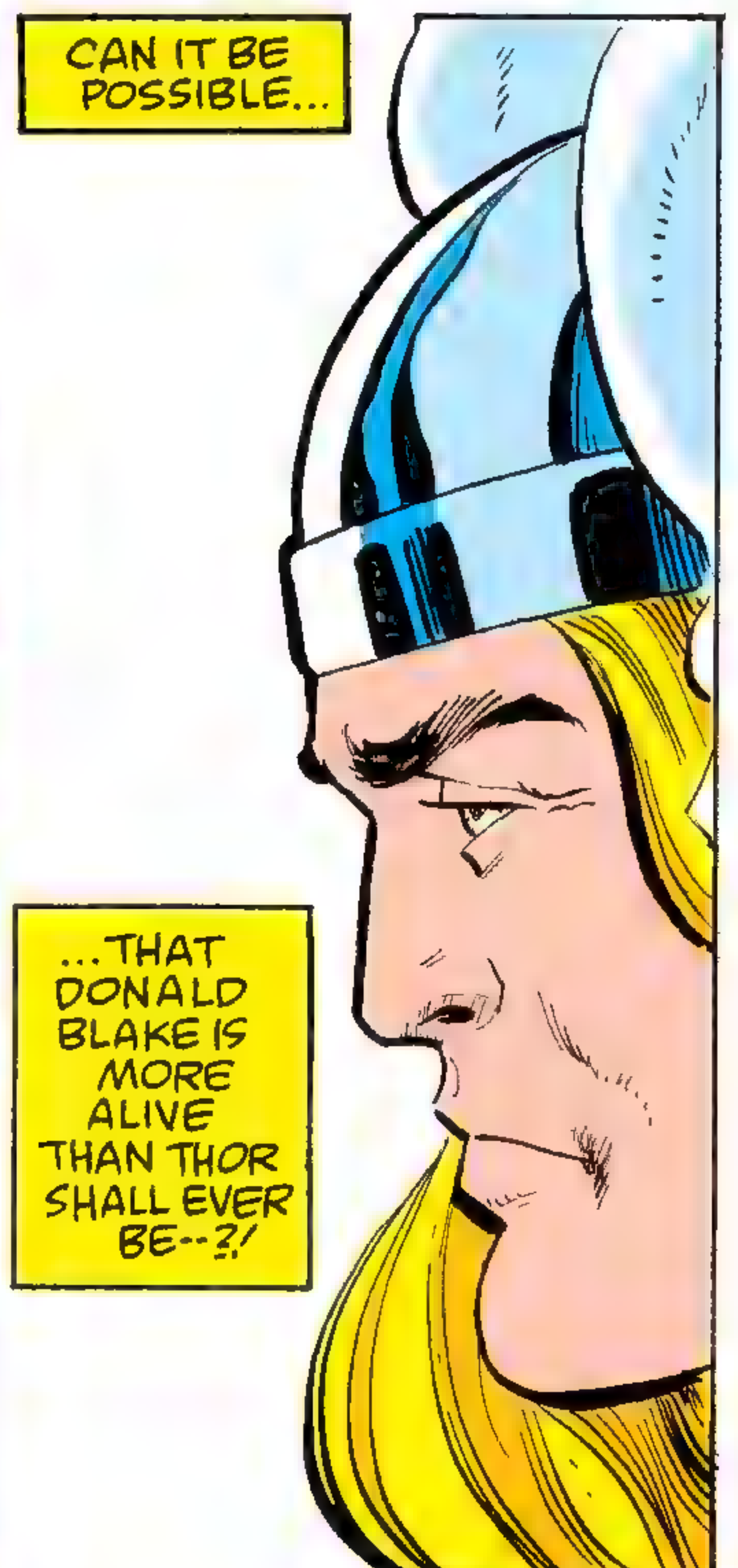
NOW, I SIT ATOP A DUNG-HEAP, OVERLOOKING AN ANTHILL.



AND YET, A PART OF ME...

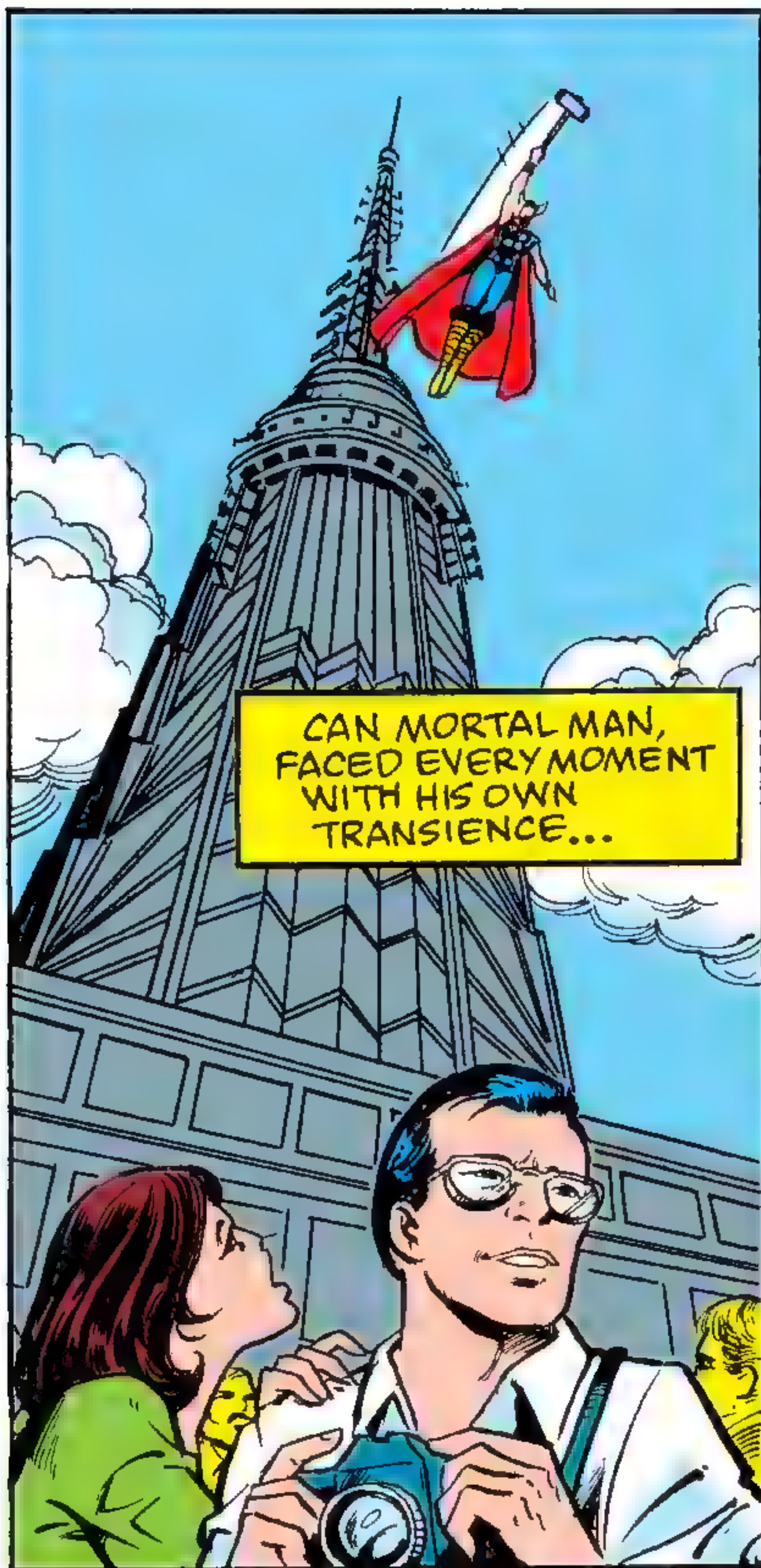


... BELONGS HERE... WITH THEM...



CAN IT BE POSSIBLE...

... THAT DONALD BLAKE IS MORE ALIVE THAN THOR SHALL EVER BE--?!



CAN MORTAL MAN,
FACED EVERY MOMENT
WITH HIS OWN
TRANSCIENCE...



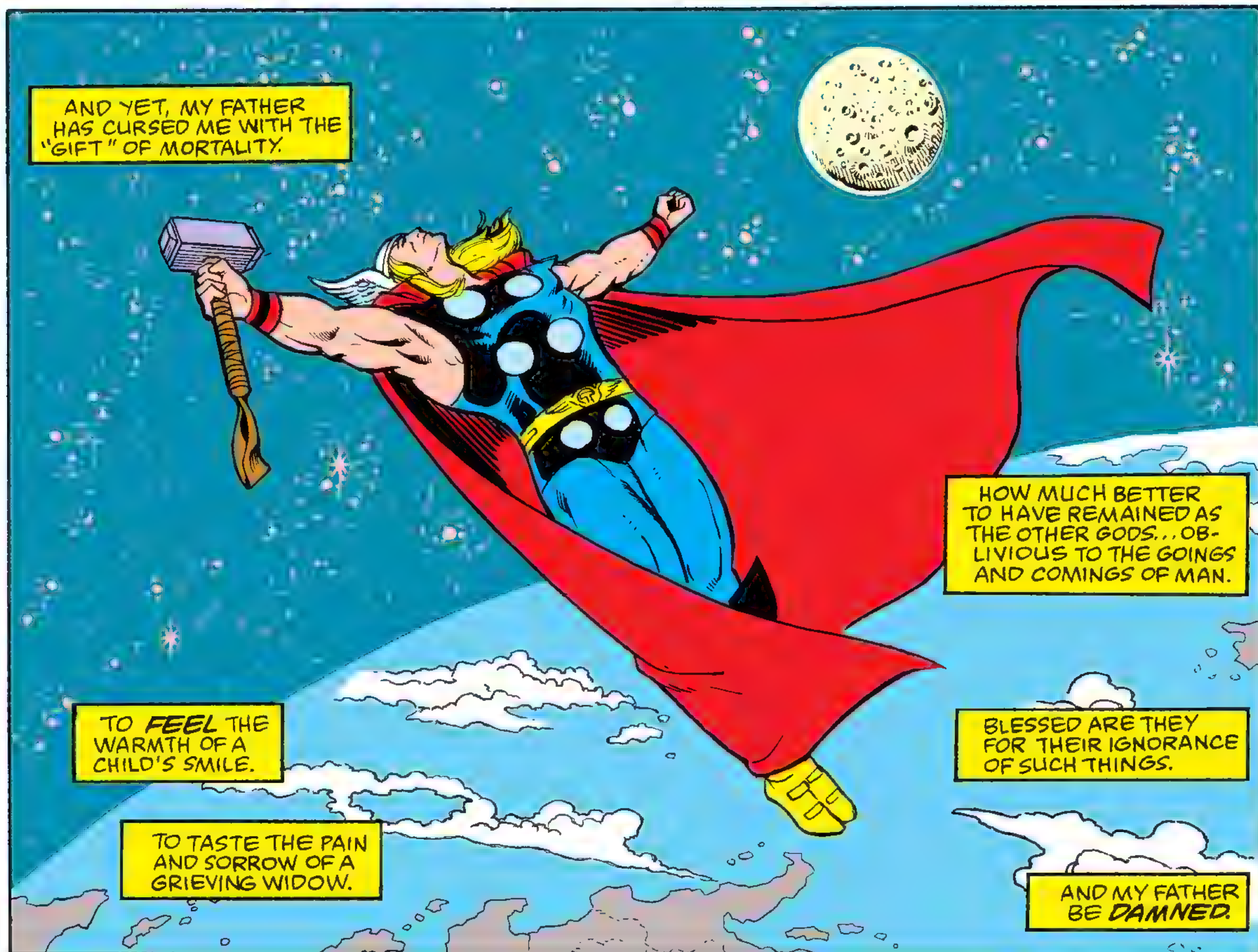
... BE MORE
GOOLIKE
THAN WE...

... WHO CALL
OURSELVES
GODS?



CAN MY
EXISTENCE
BE THAT
ONLY?

CAN MY LIFE BE
SO HOLLOW?



AND YET, MY FATHER
HAS CURSED ME WITH THE
"GIFT" OF MORTALITY.

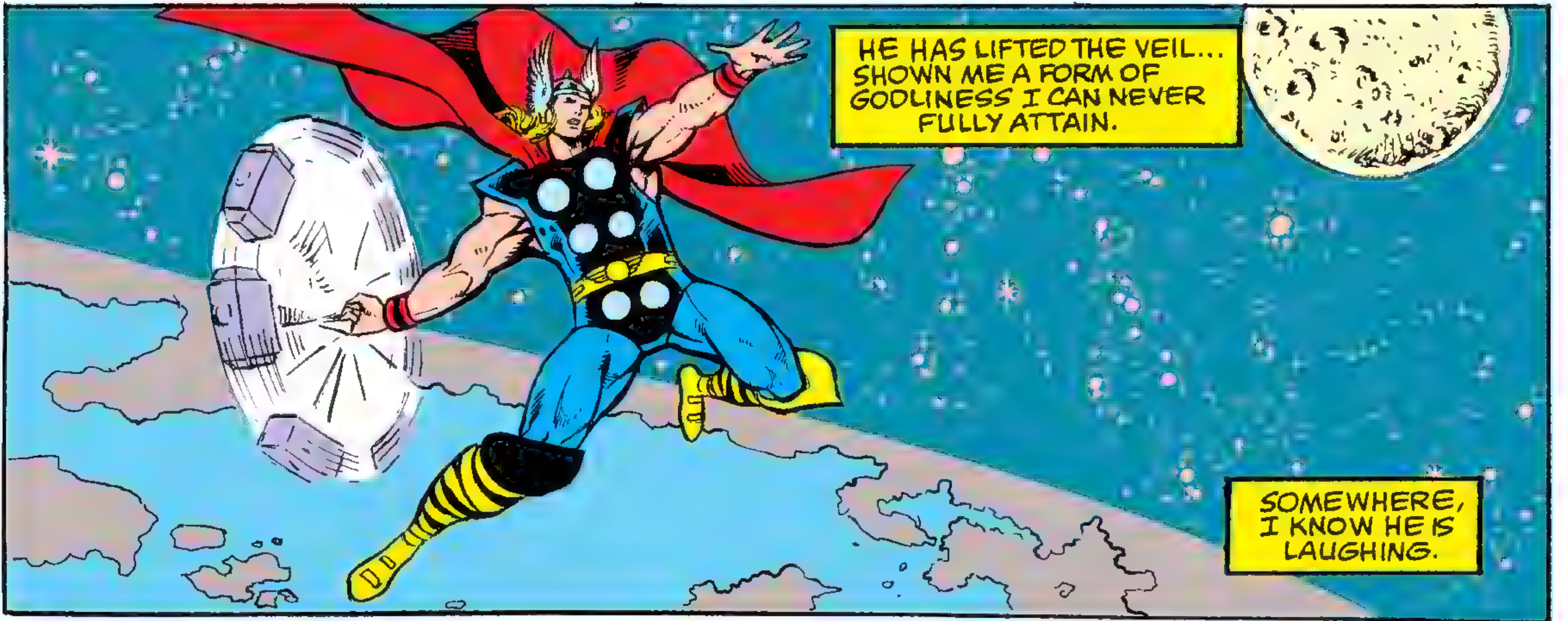
TO **FEEL** THE
WARMTH OF A
CHILD'S SMILE.

TO TASTE THE PAIN
AND SORROW OF A
GRIEVING WIDOW.

HOW MUCH BETTER
TO HAVE REMAINED AS
THE OTHER GODS... OB-
LIVIOUS TO THE GOINGS
AND COMINGS OF MAN.

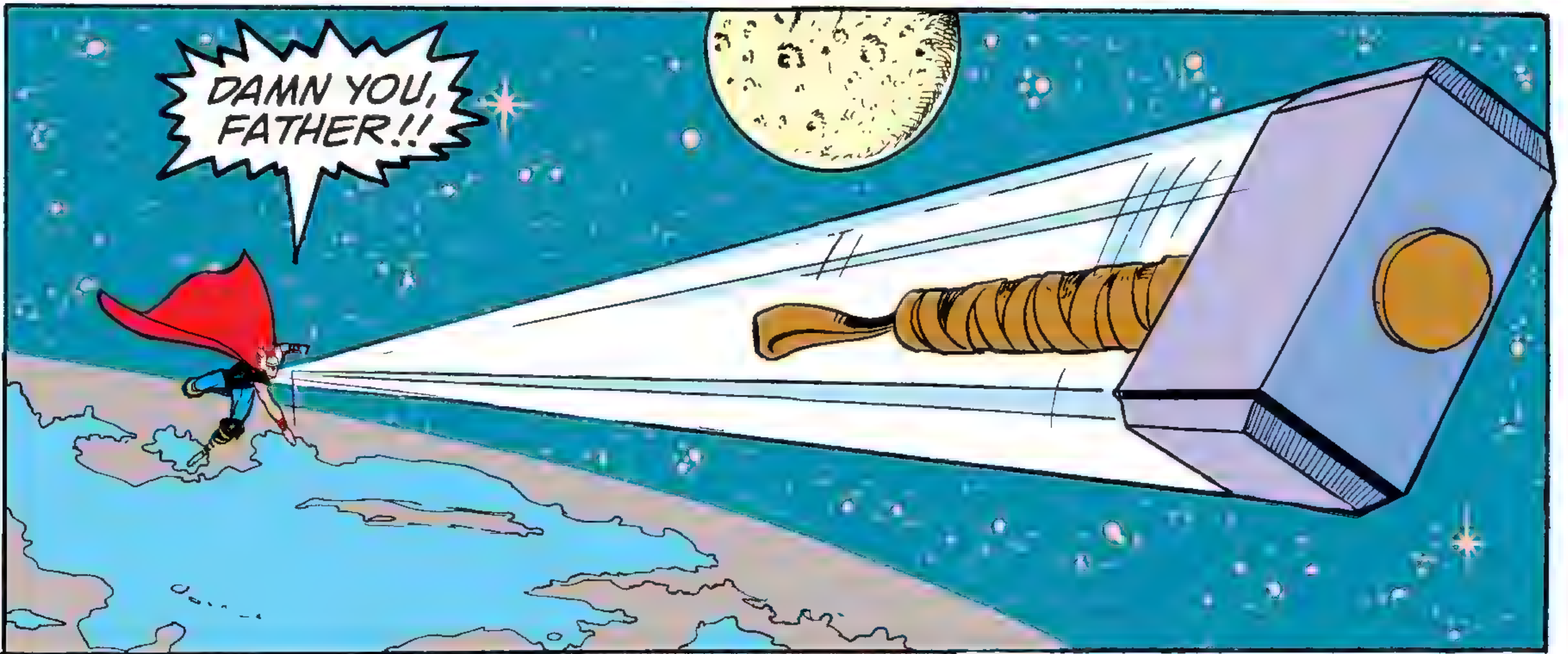
BLESSED ARE THEY
FOR THEIR IGNORANCE
OF SUCH THINGS.

AND MY FATHER
BE **DAMNED**.



HE HAS LIFTED THE VEIL...
SHOWN ME A FORM OF
GODLINESS I CAN NEVER
FULLY ATTAIN.

SOMEWHERE,
I KNOW HE IS
LAUGHING.



DAMN YOU,
FATHER!!



I HAVE FLUNG
MJOLNIR TO THE
FARTHEST REACHES
OF THIS GALAXY.

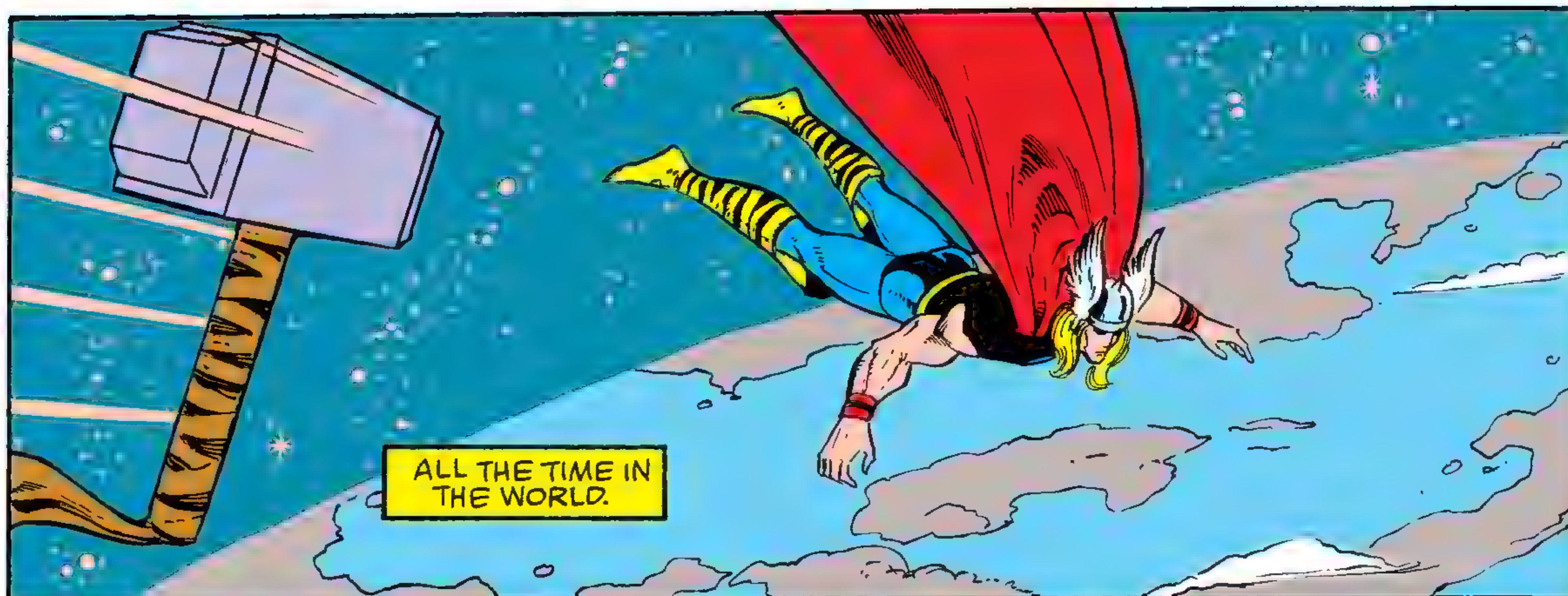


IT WILL TAKE
QUITE SOME TIME
TO RETURN.

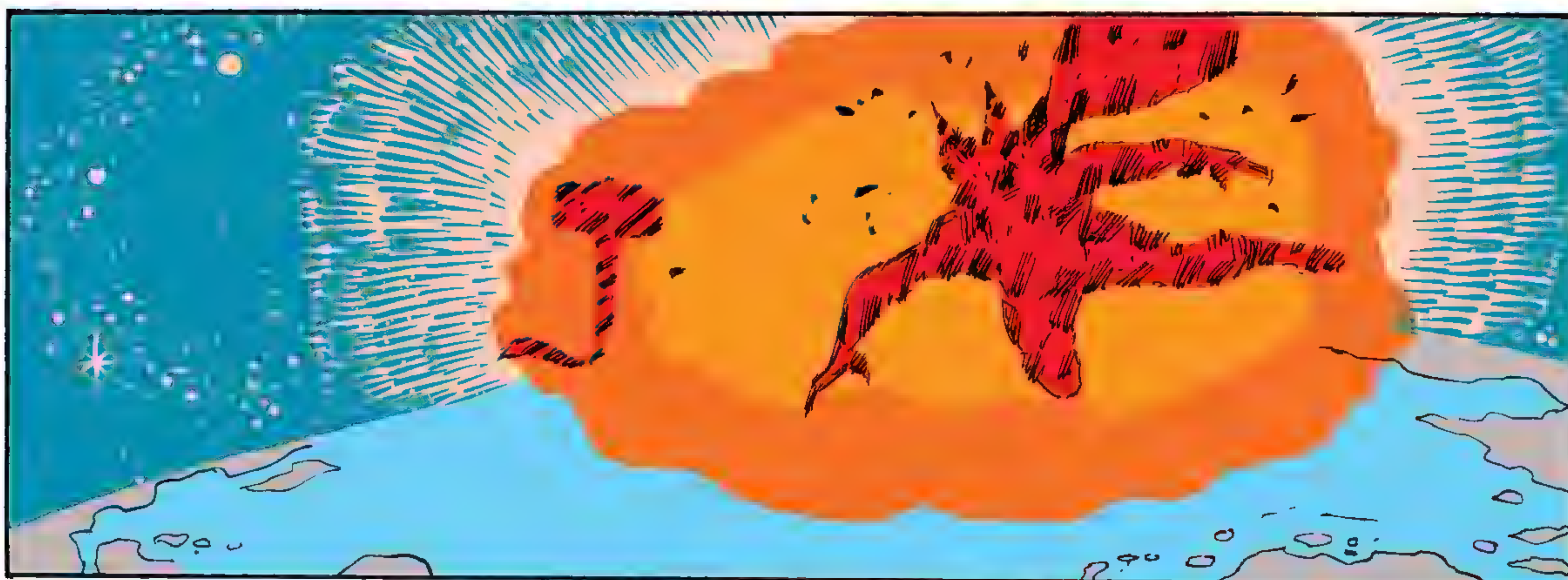
I NEED BE
SEPARATED
FROM IT ONLY
SIXTY SECONDS.



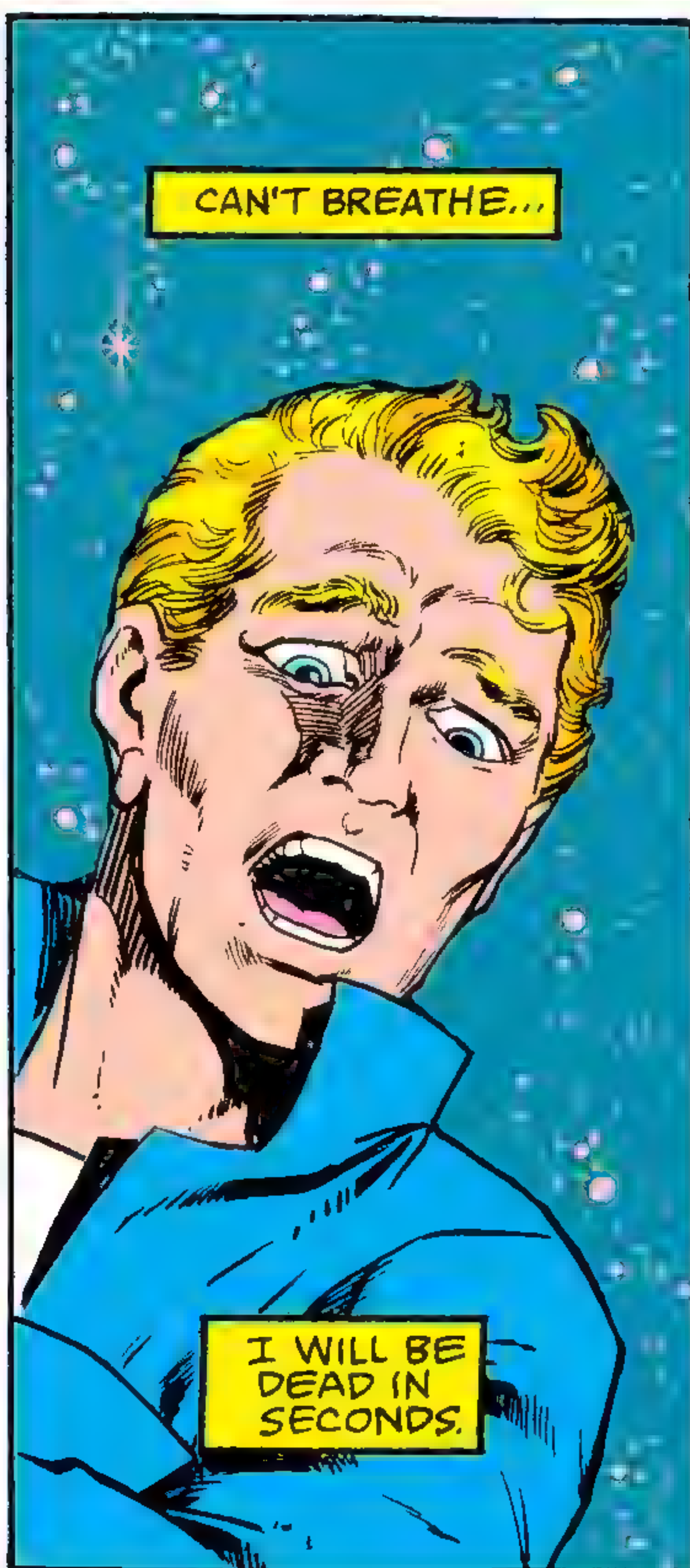
MORE THAN
ENOUGH TIME.



ALL THE TIME IN
THE WORLD.

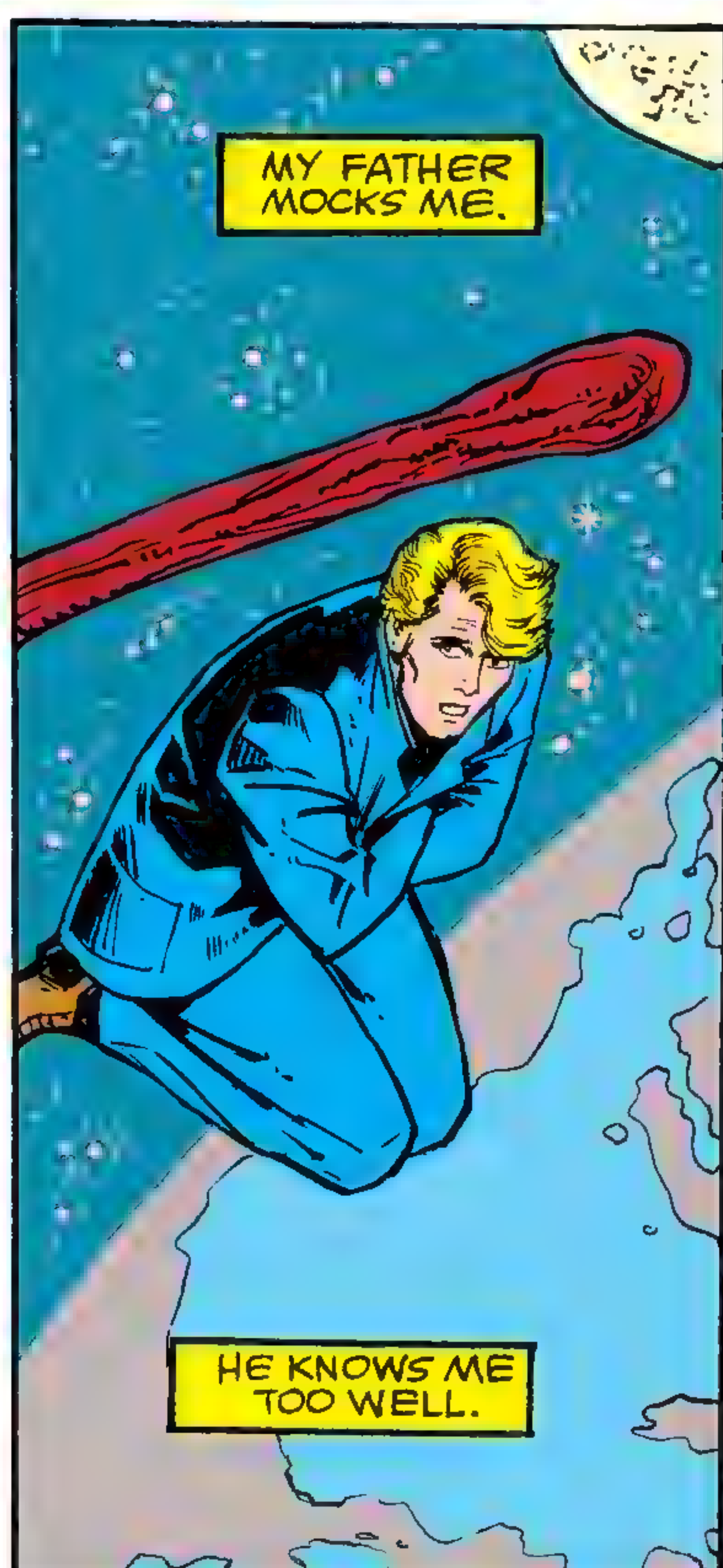


THE COLD...



CAN'T BREATHE...

I WILL BE
DEAD IN
SECONDS.



MY FATHER
MOCKS ME.

HE KNOWS ME
TOO WELL.



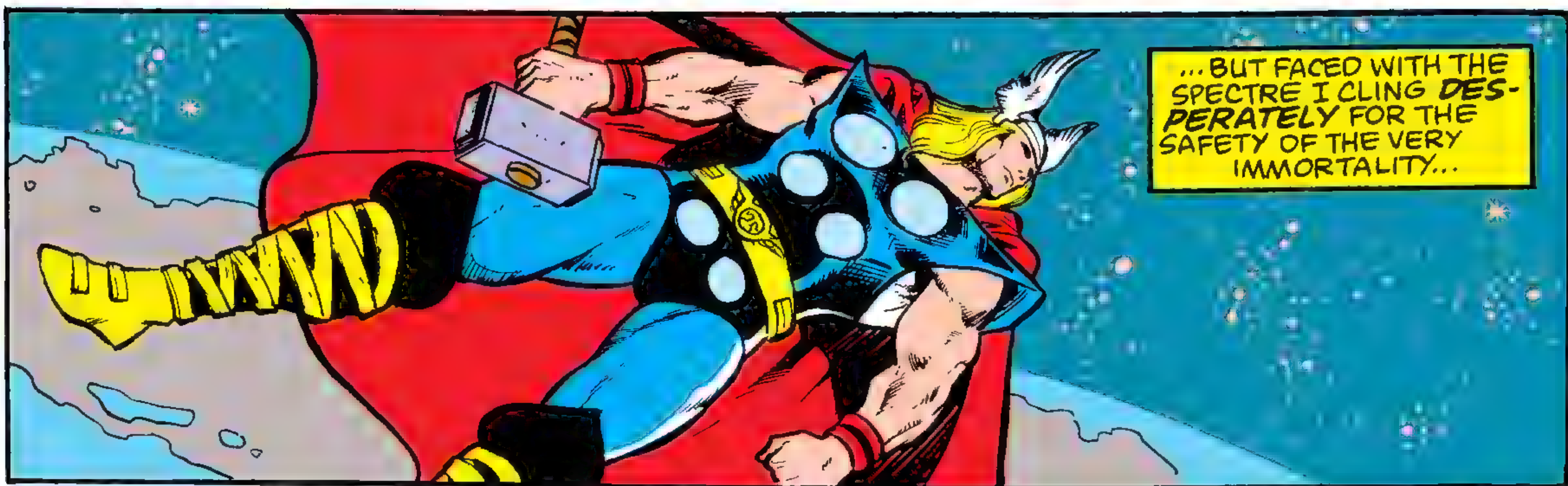
I CURSE HIM
EVEN AS I TAKE
HOLD OF HIS
CONVENTION.



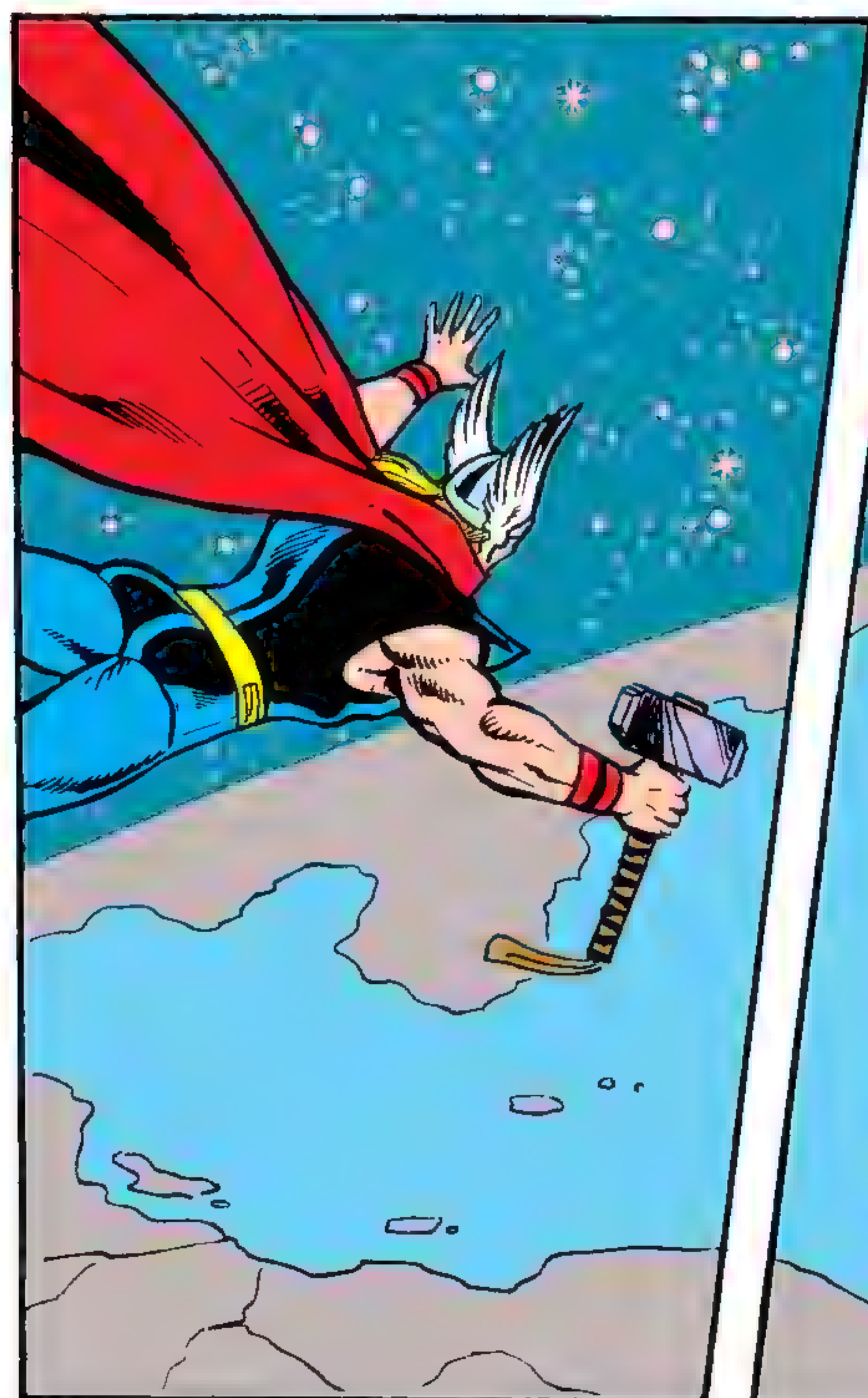
SHAME
GRIPS ME
WITH AN IRON
HAND.



I SHOULD PERISH.
I **WOULD** PERISH...

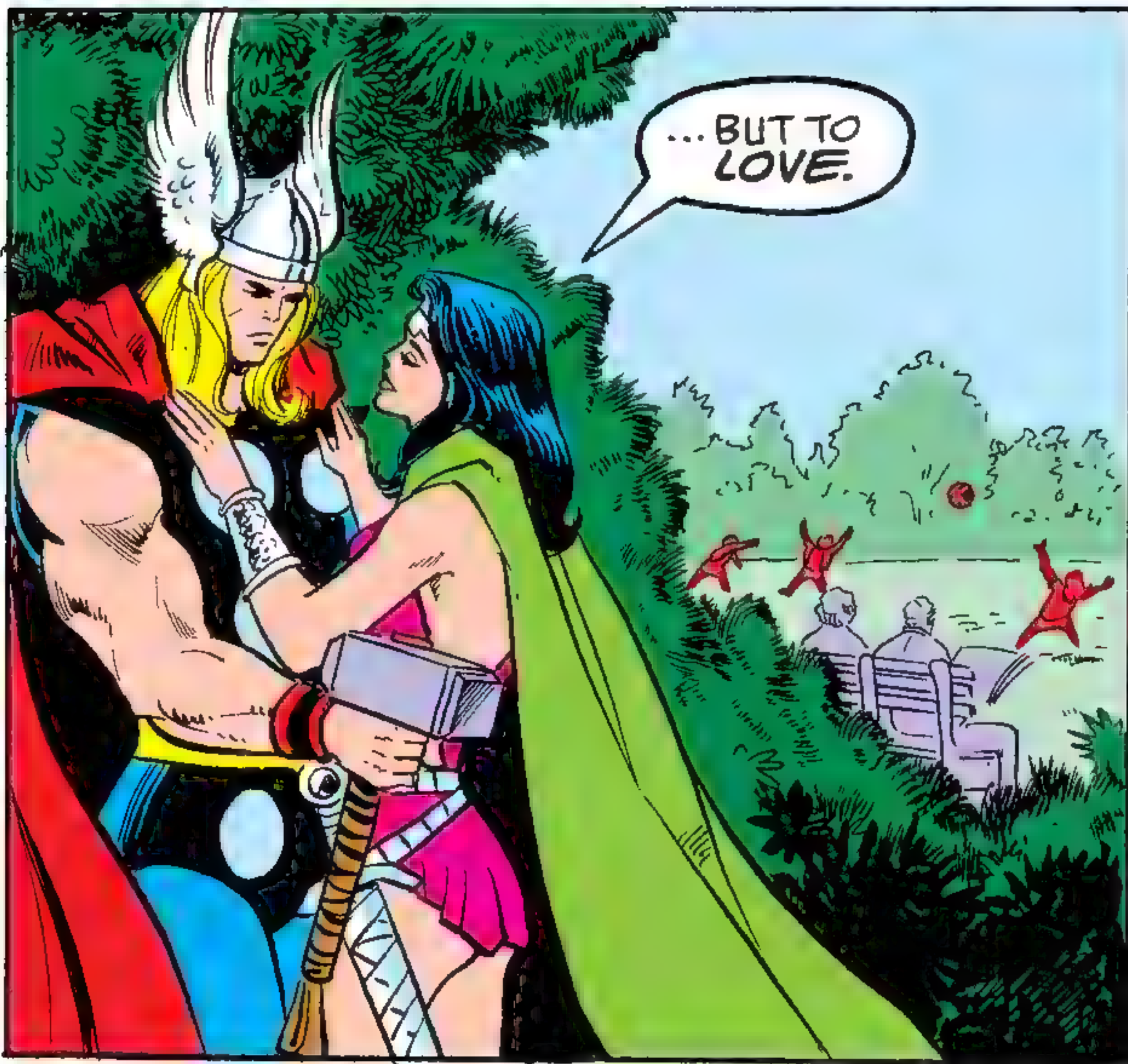
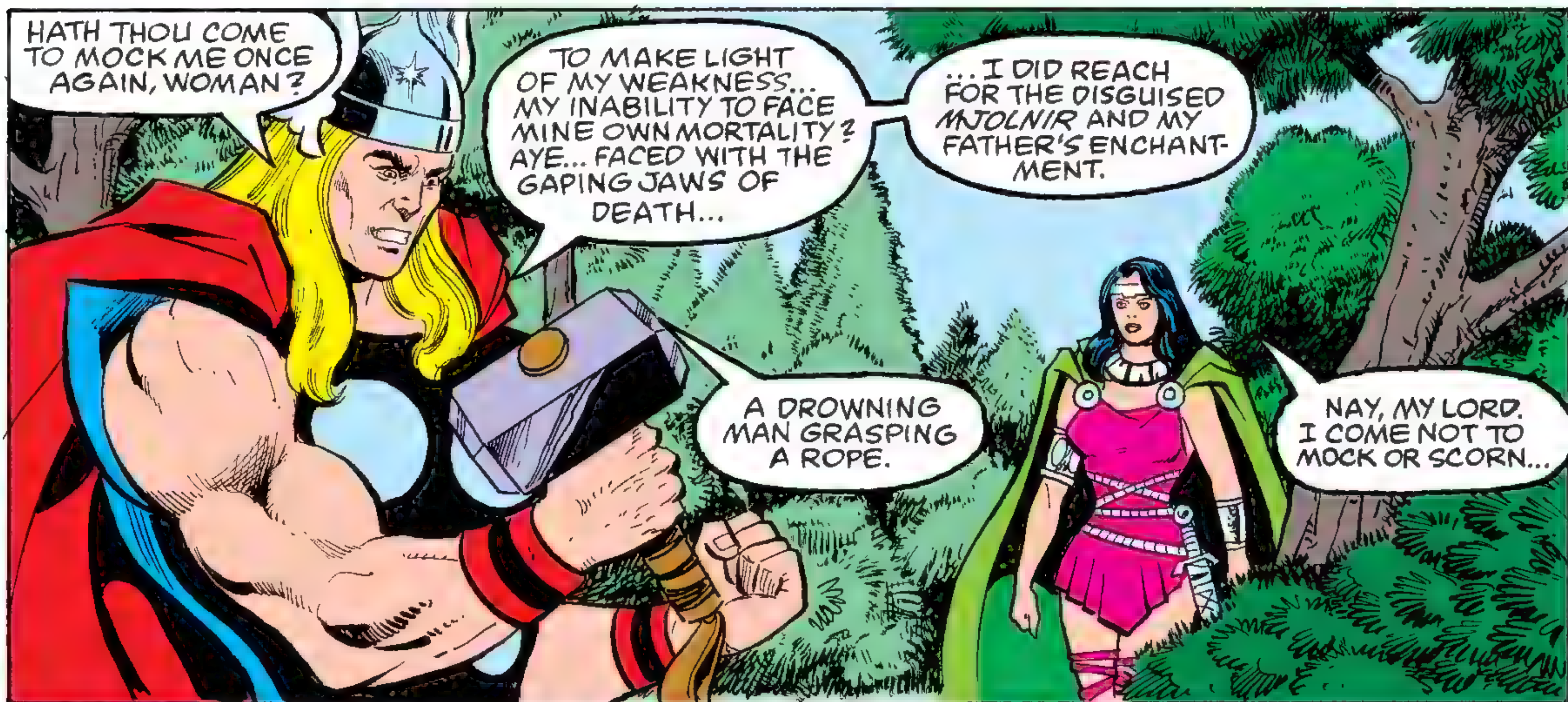
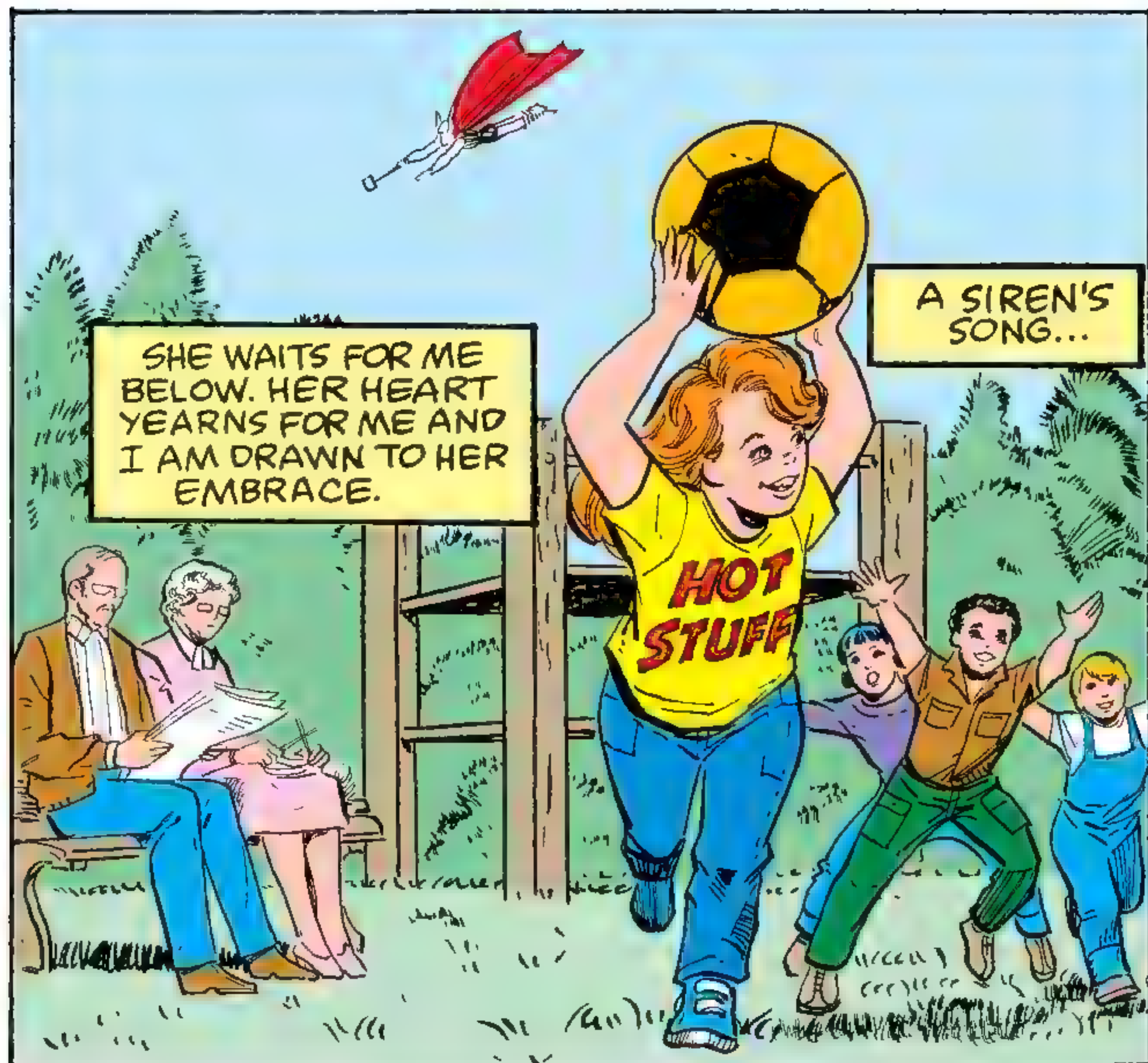


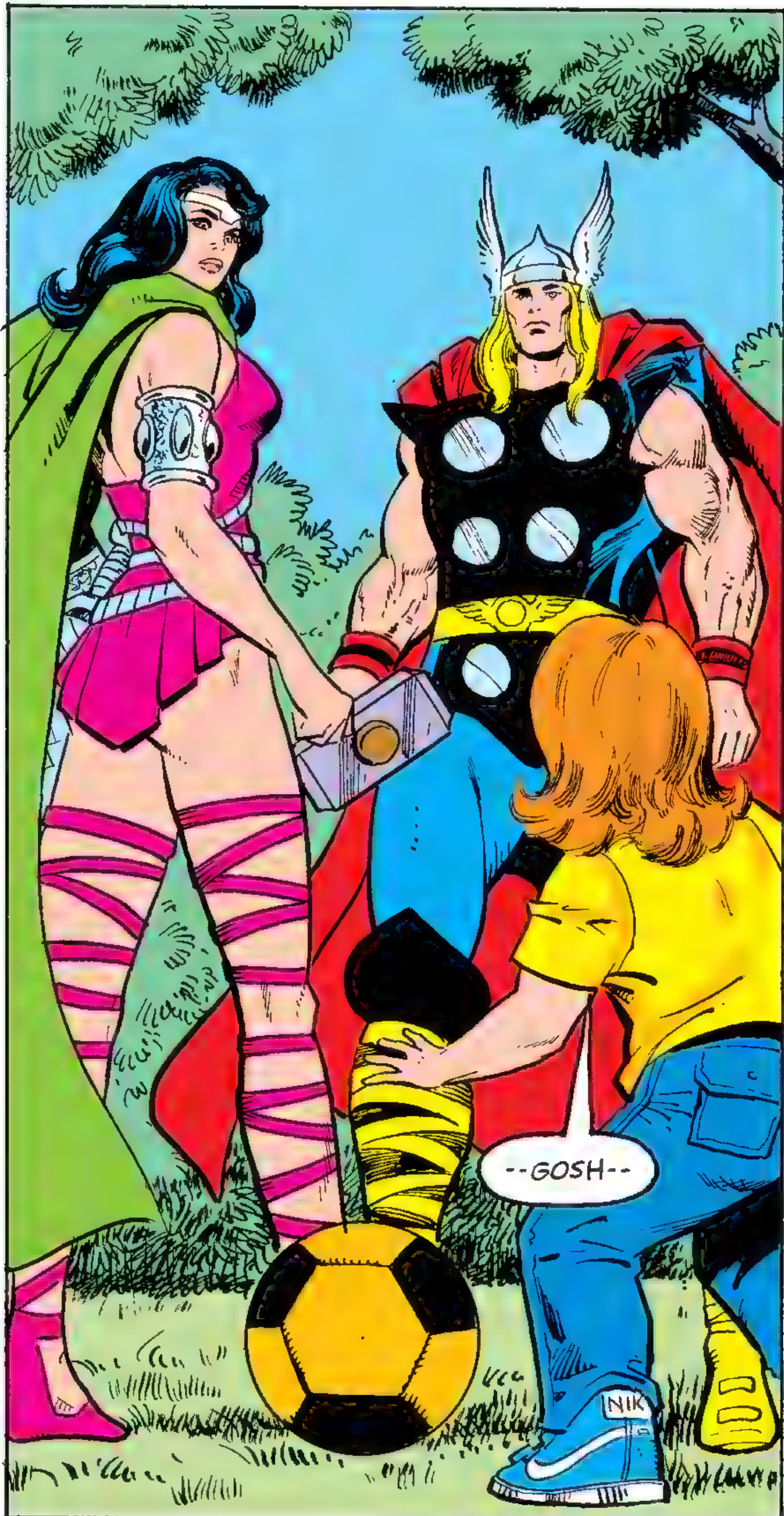
... BUT FACED WITH THE
SPECTRE I CLING **DES-
PERATELY** FOR THE
SAFETY OF THE VERY
IMMORTALITY...

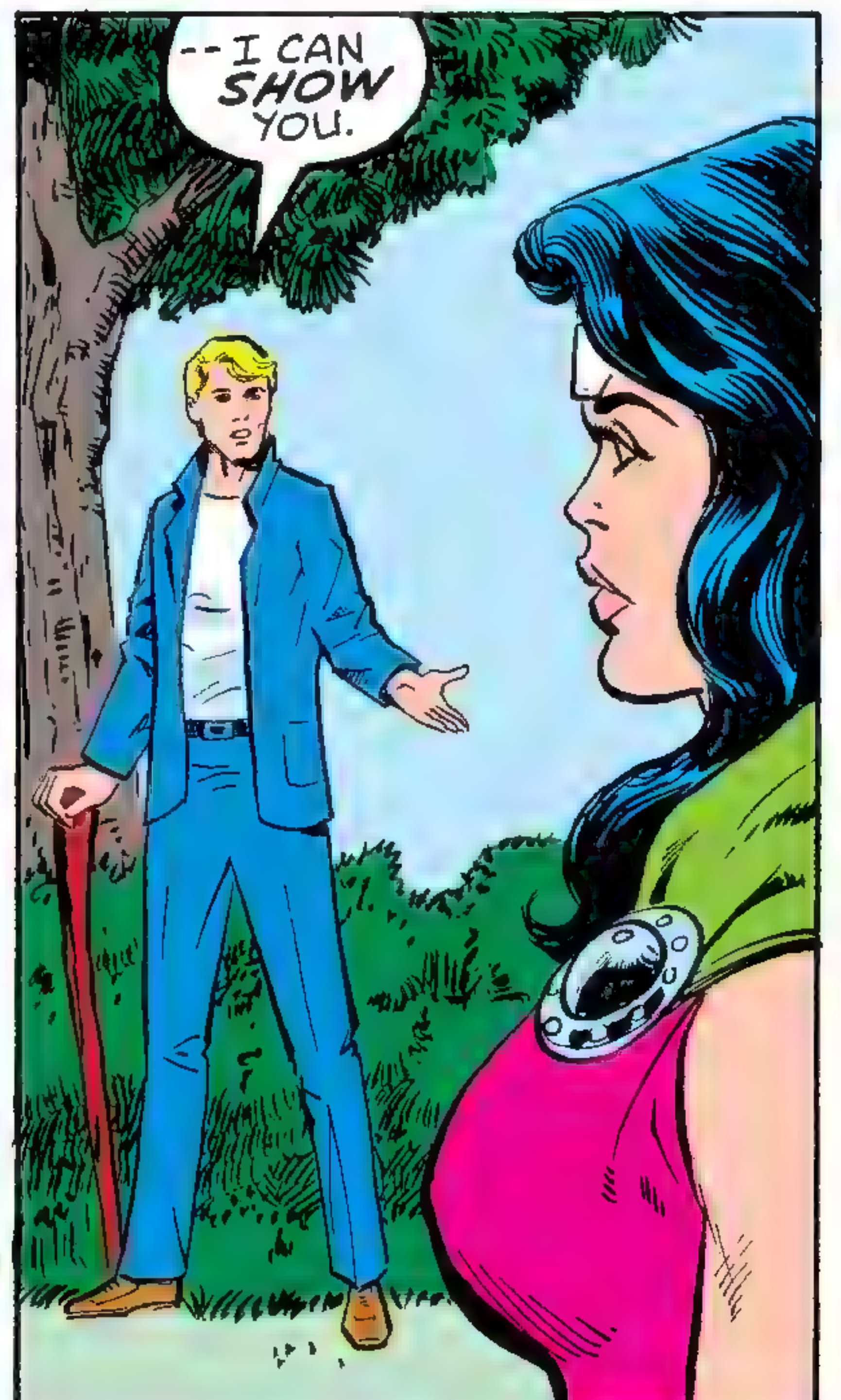
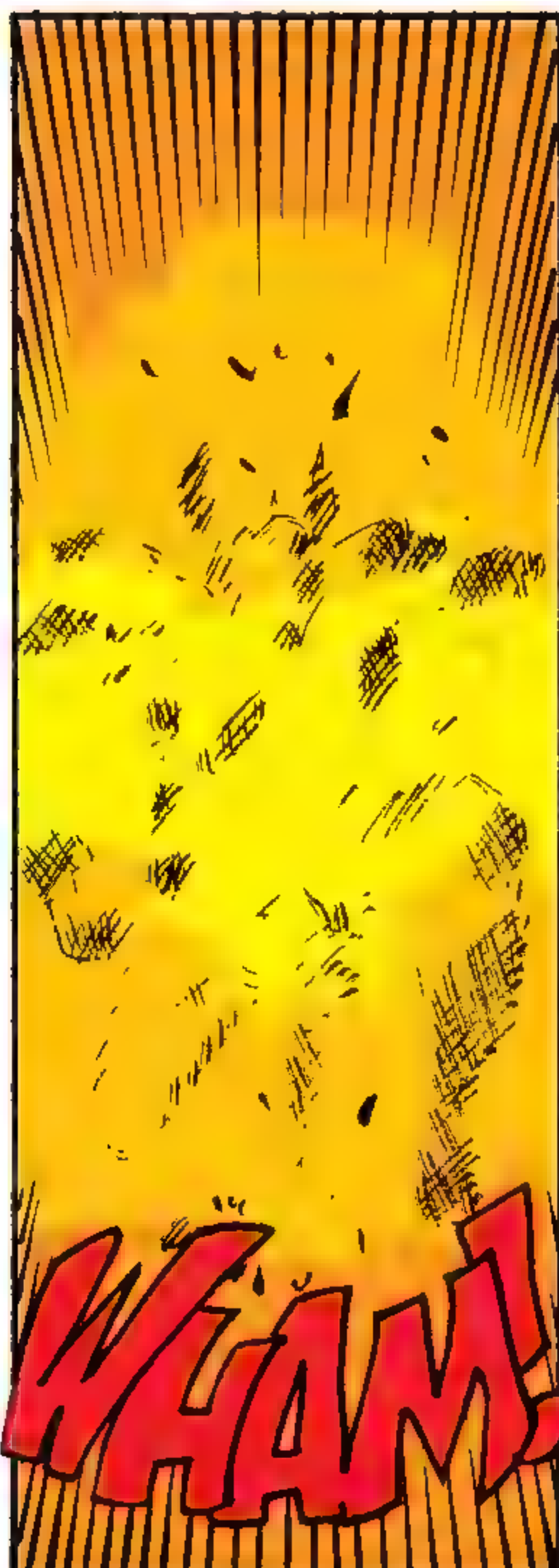
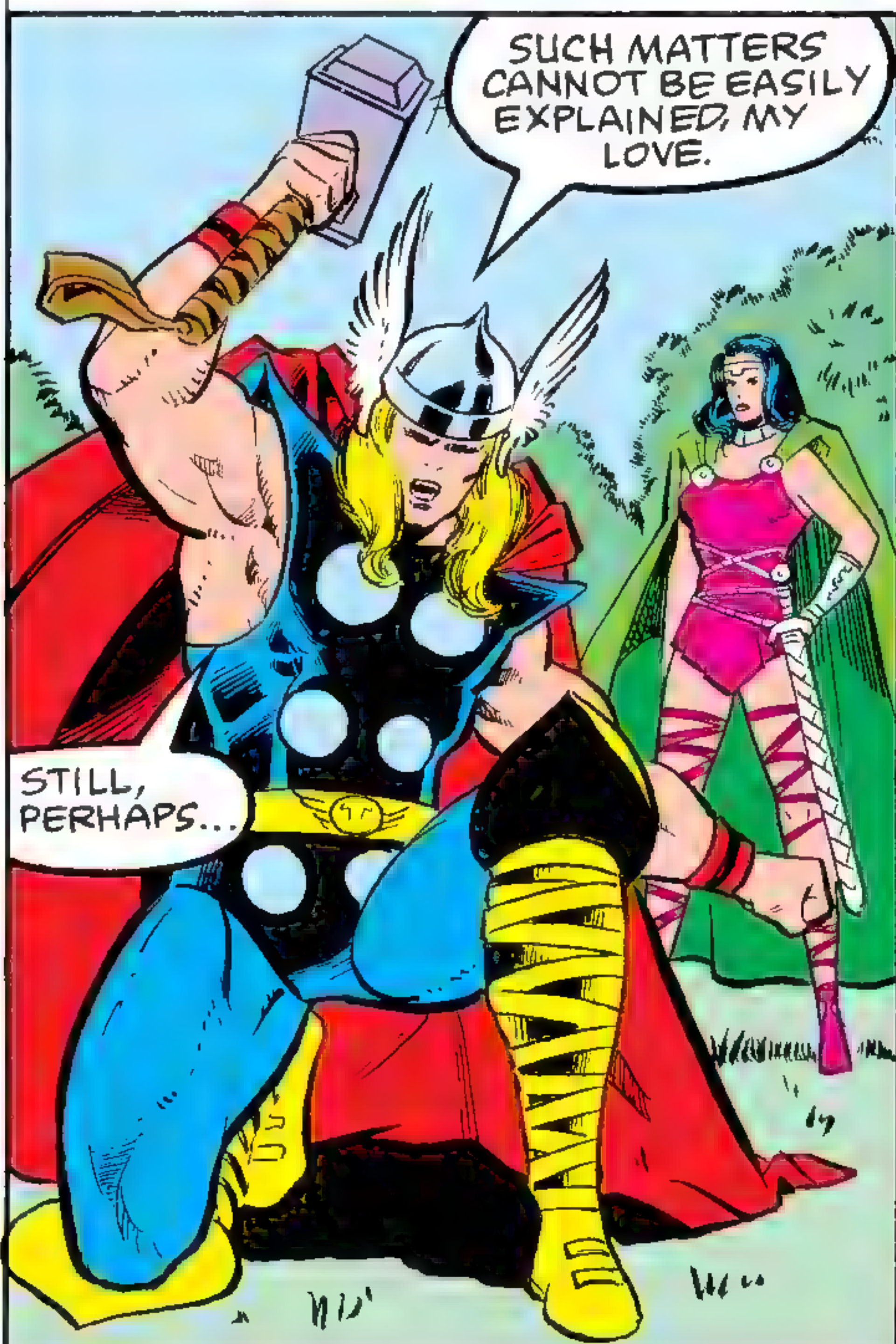
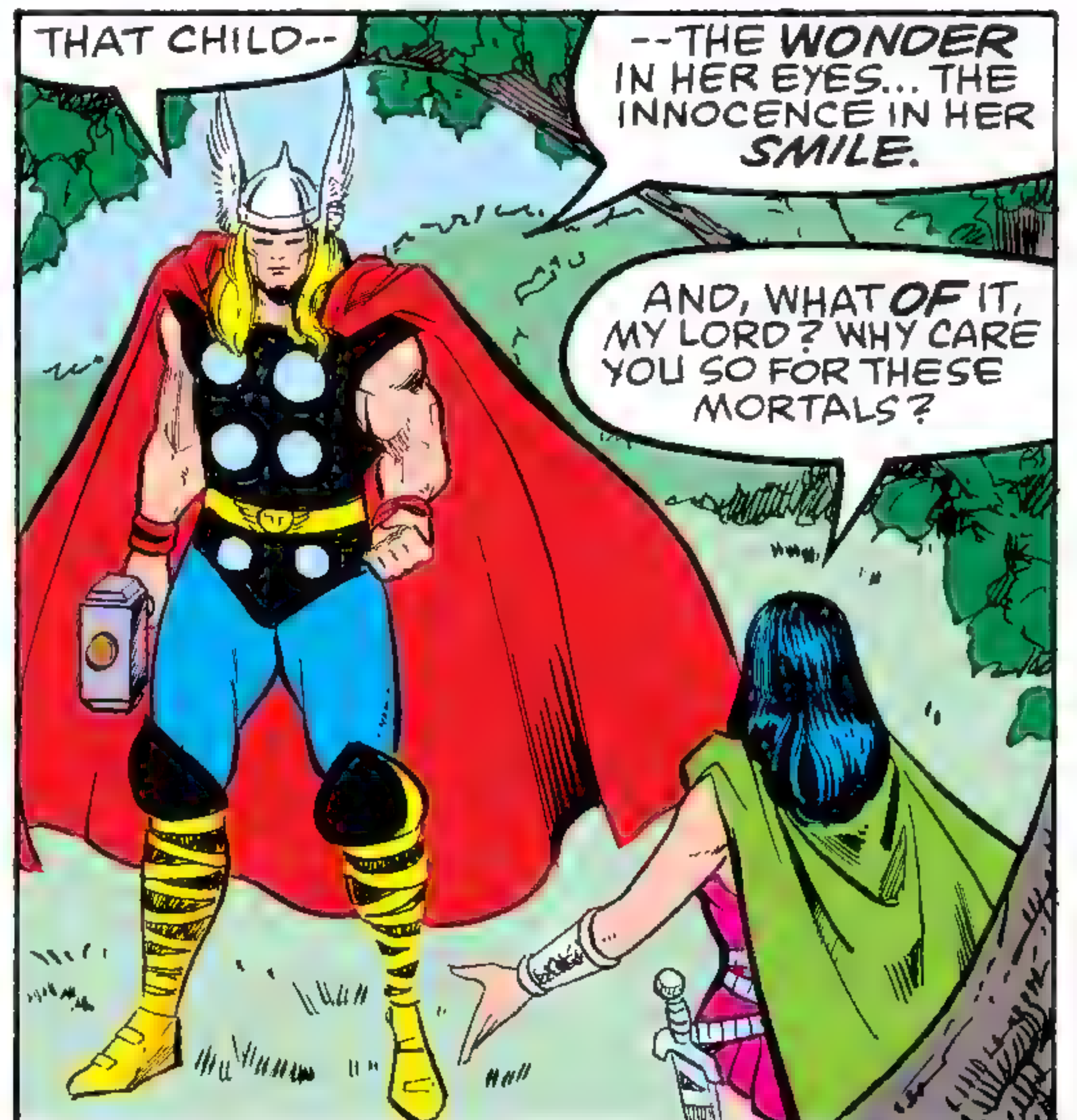
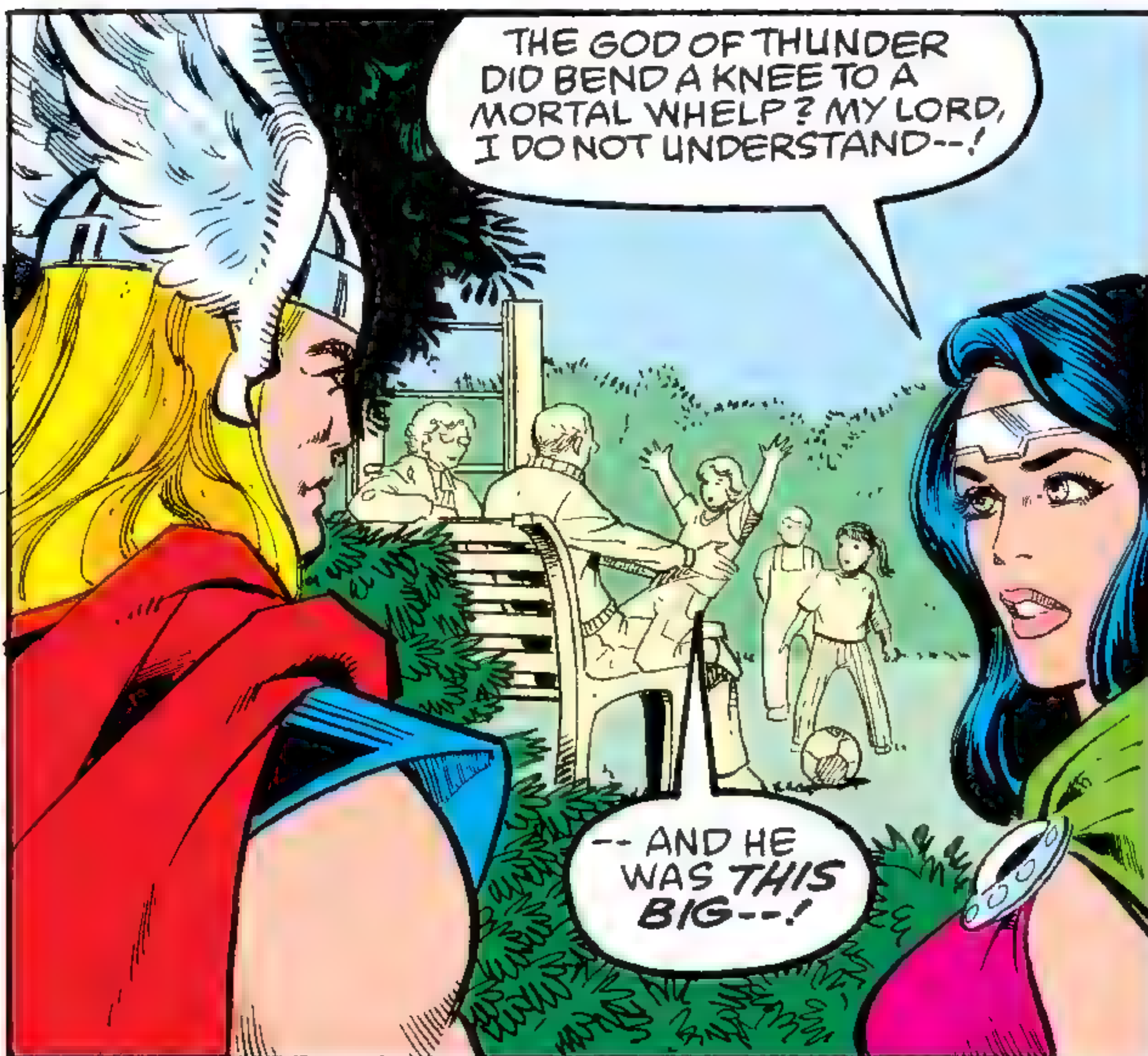
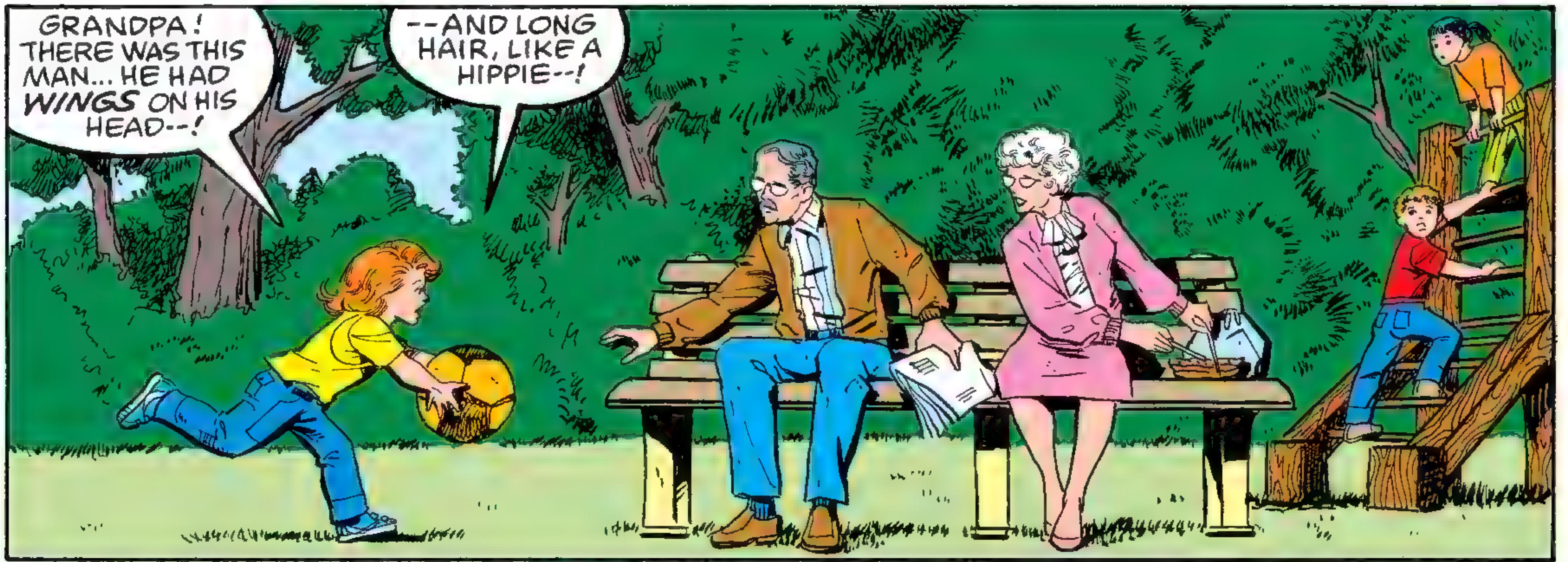


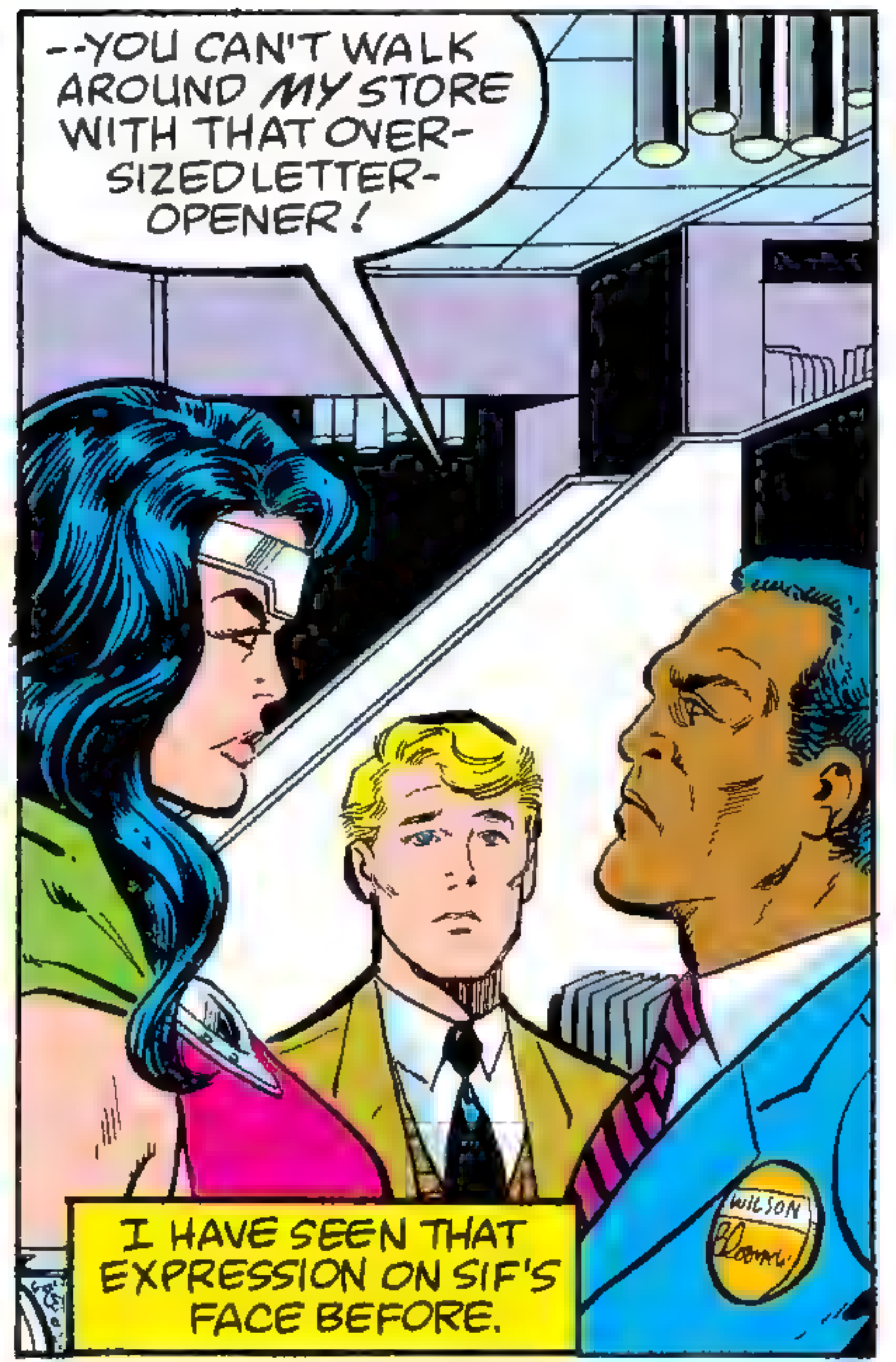
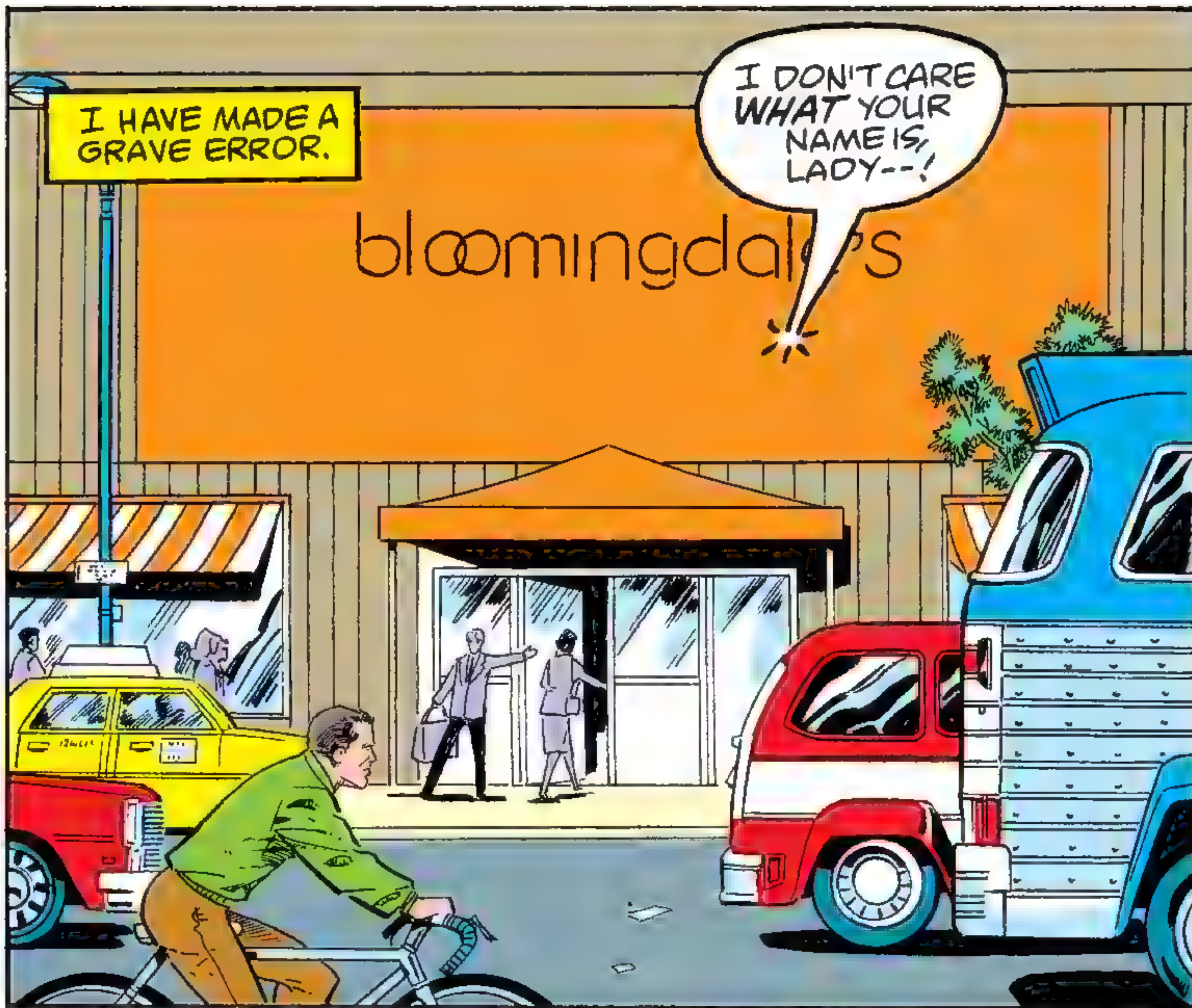
...THAT I DESPISE.

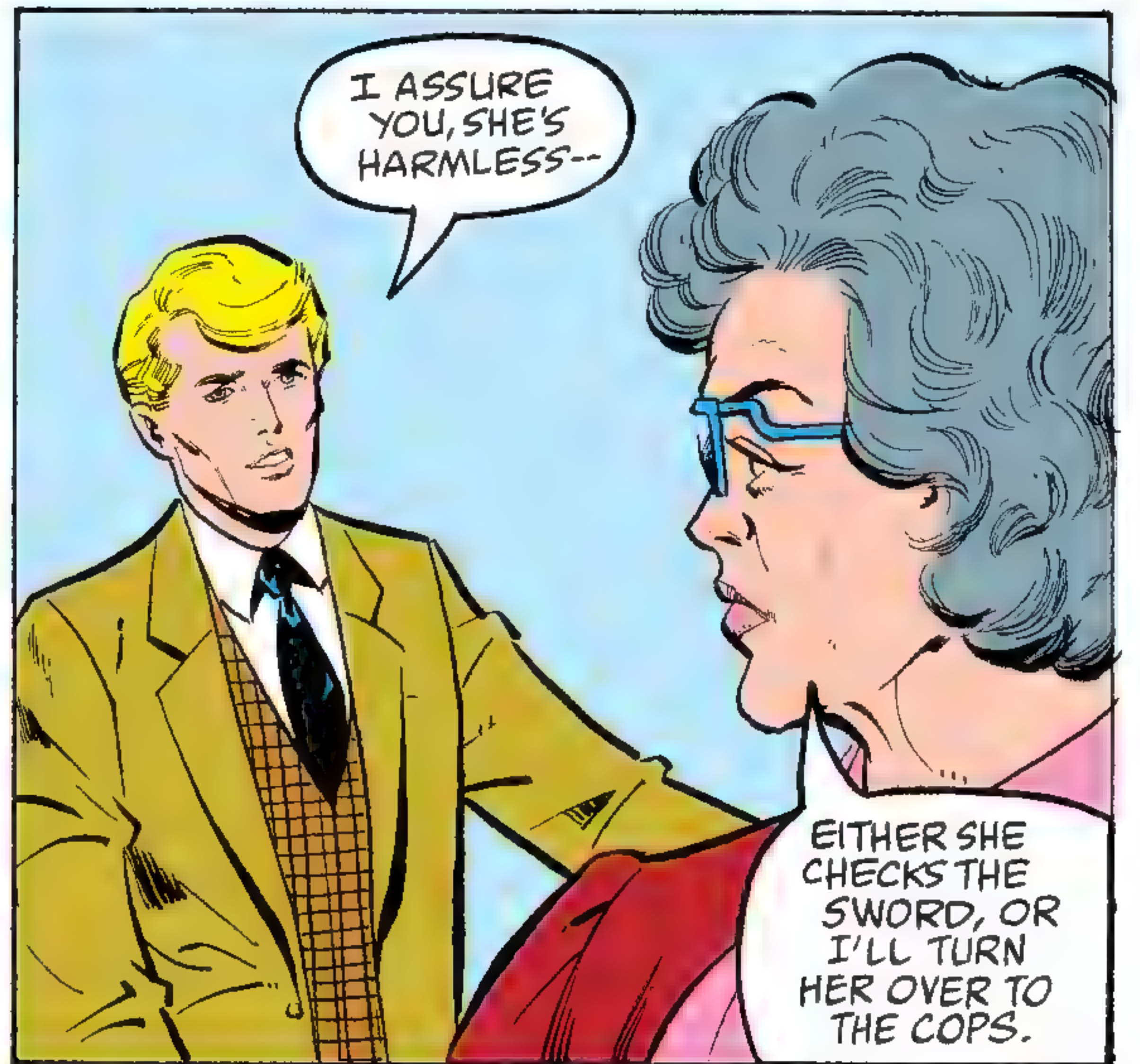
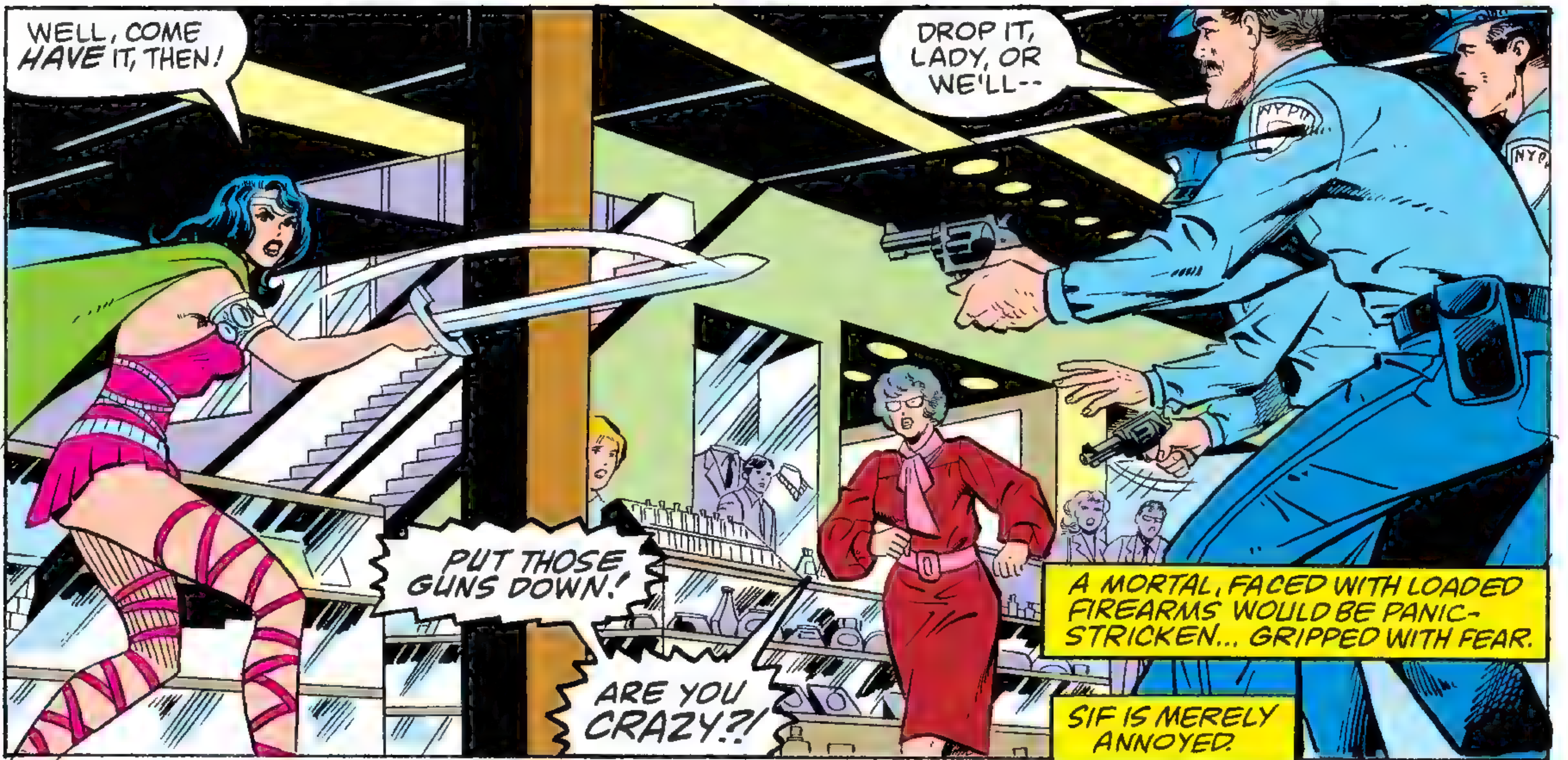


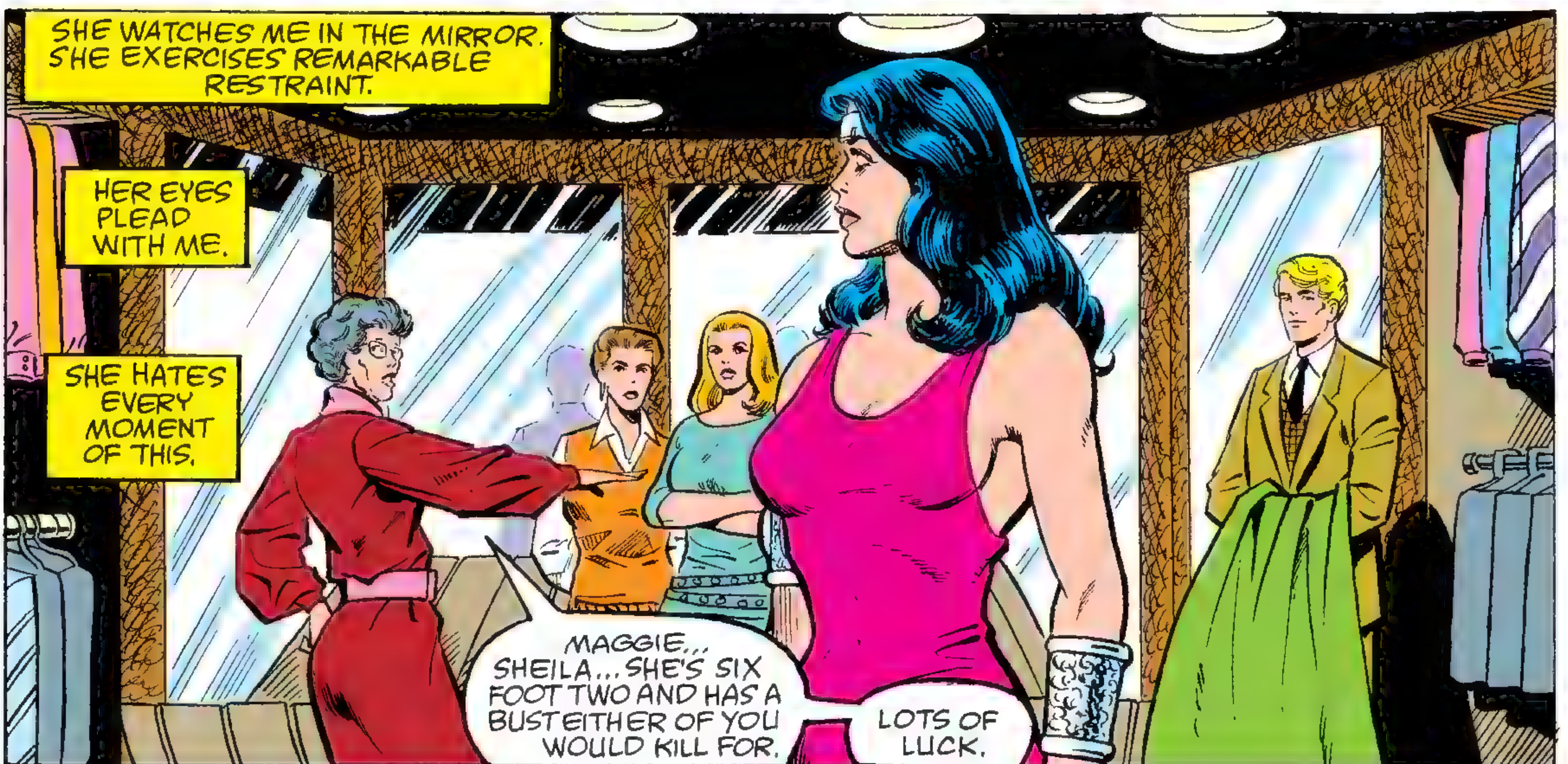
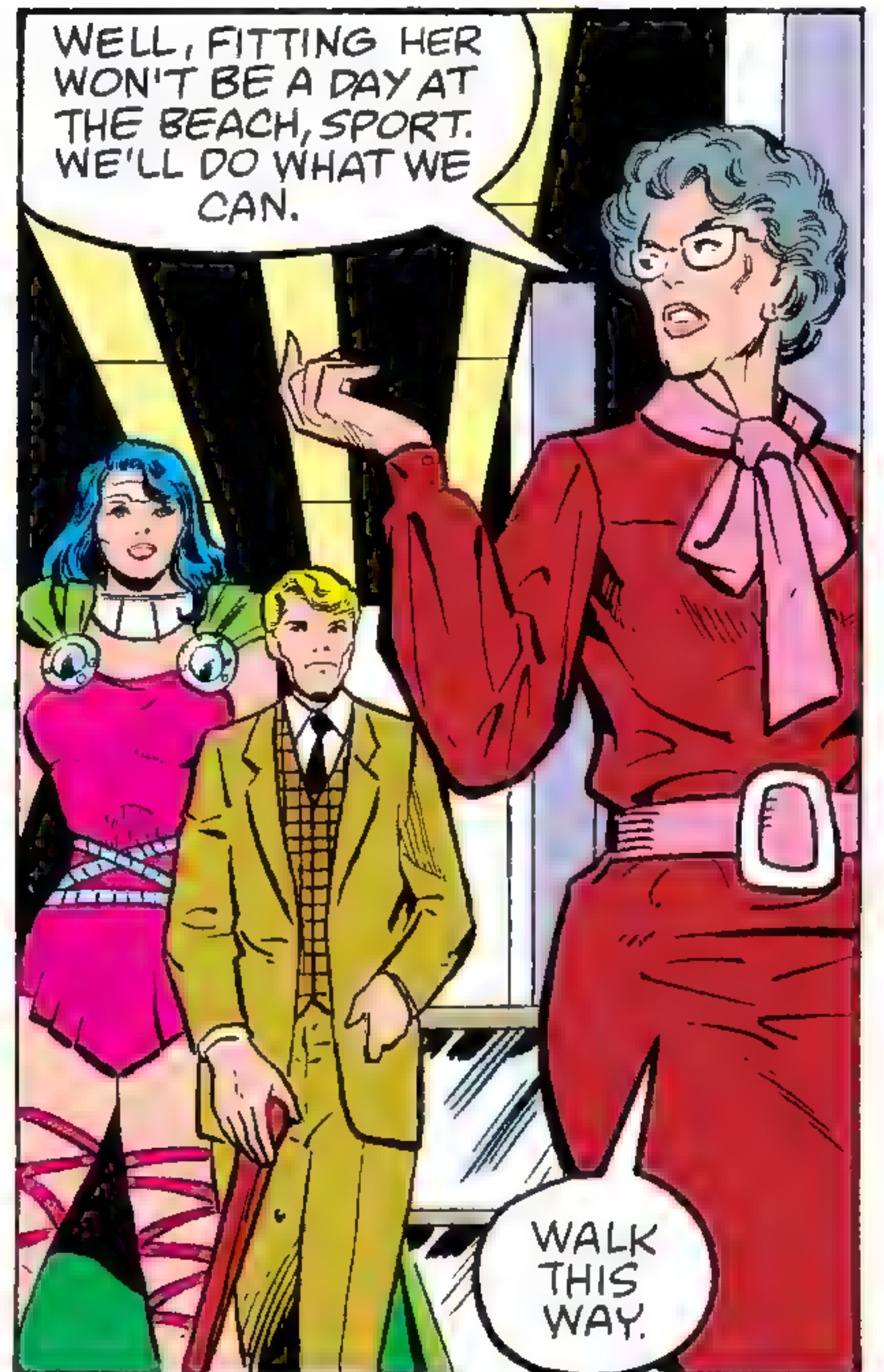












I am stripped of my sword and raiment. In return, I am given absurd, uncomfortable smallclothes and bizarre accoutrement..

I am made to look like a fool. The lowest in all Asgard would not be made to wear such habiliment.

I am patient as mortal hands pry and shape the locks of my hair, while imparting to me a measure of fools wisdom.

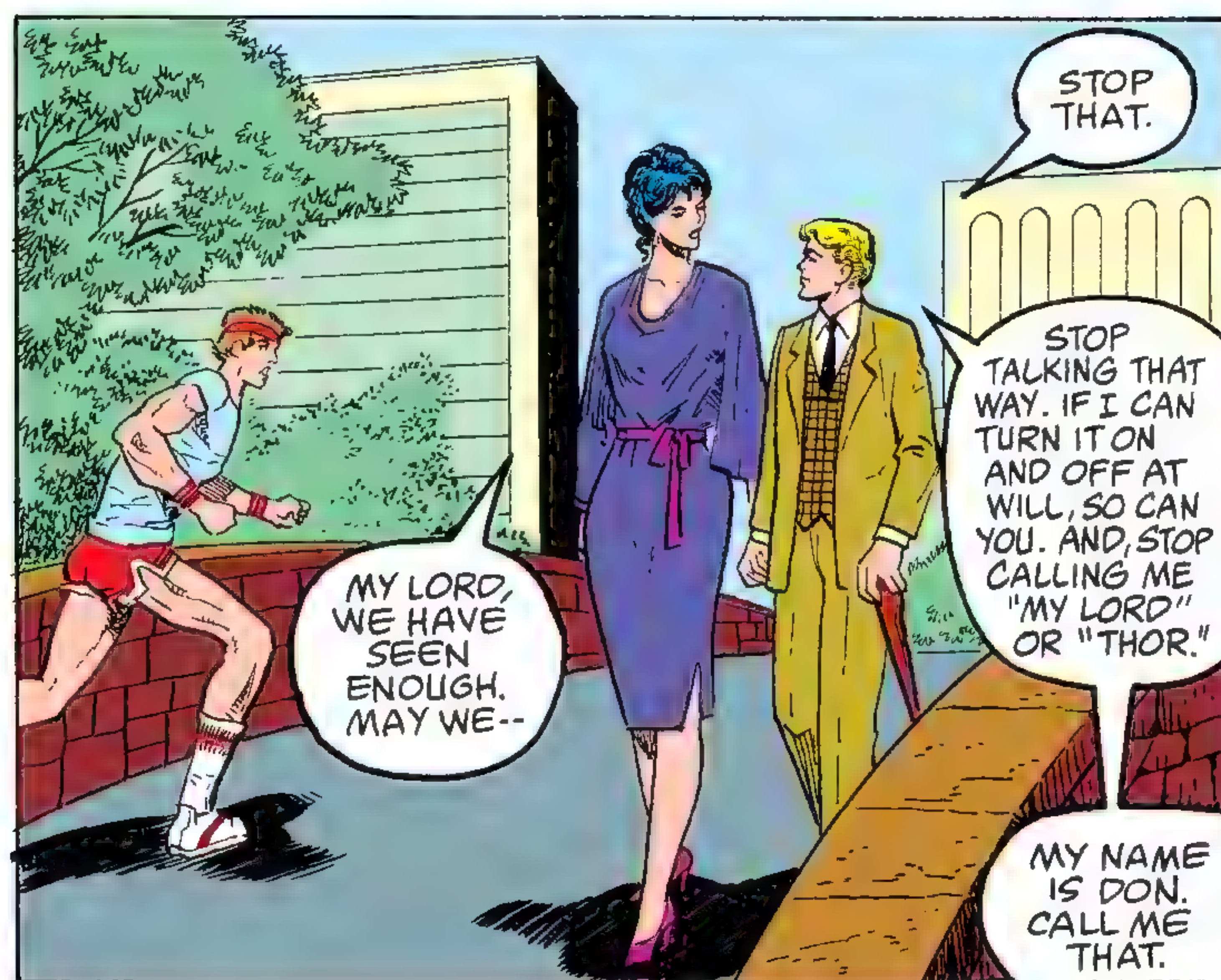
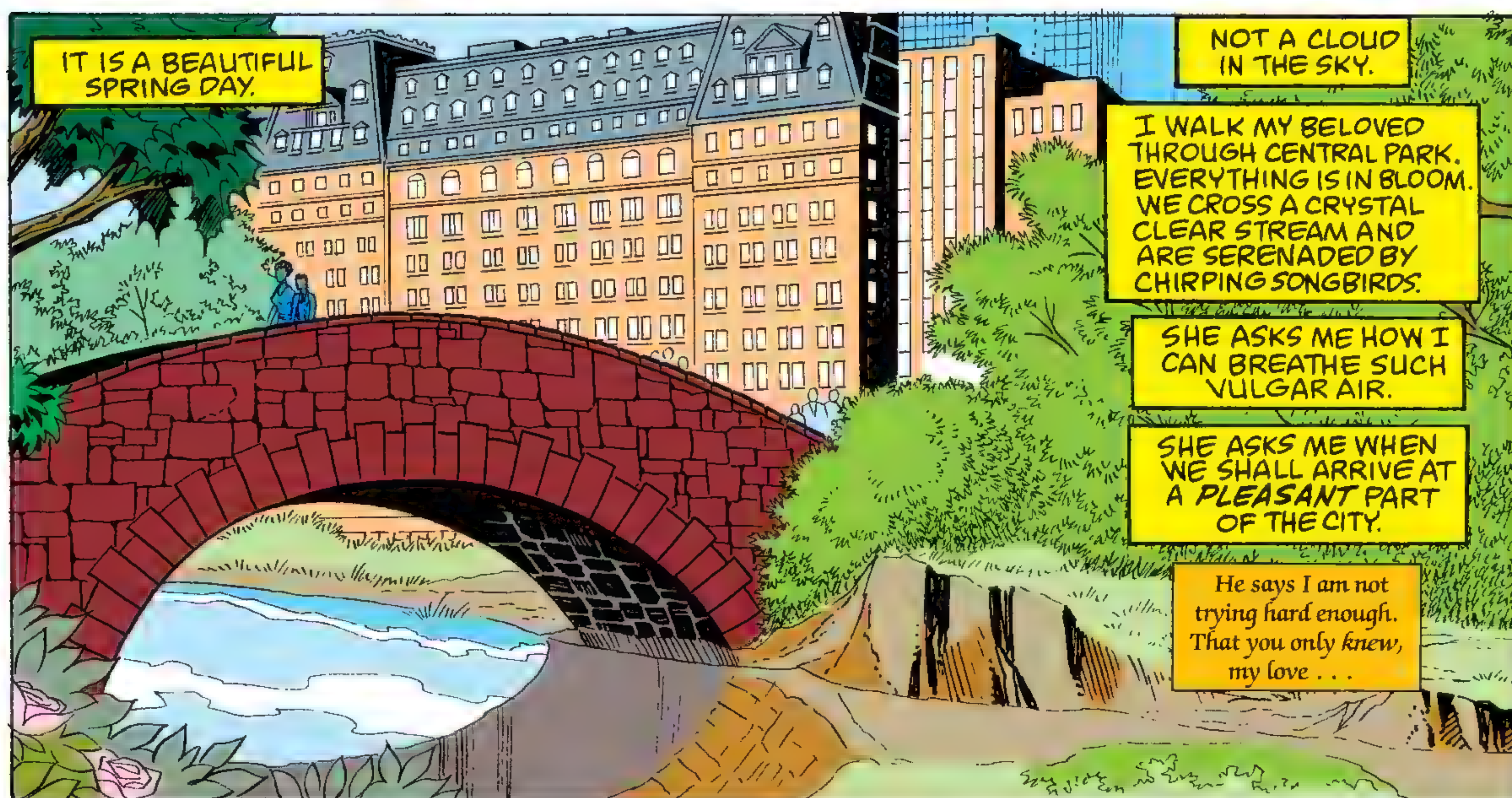
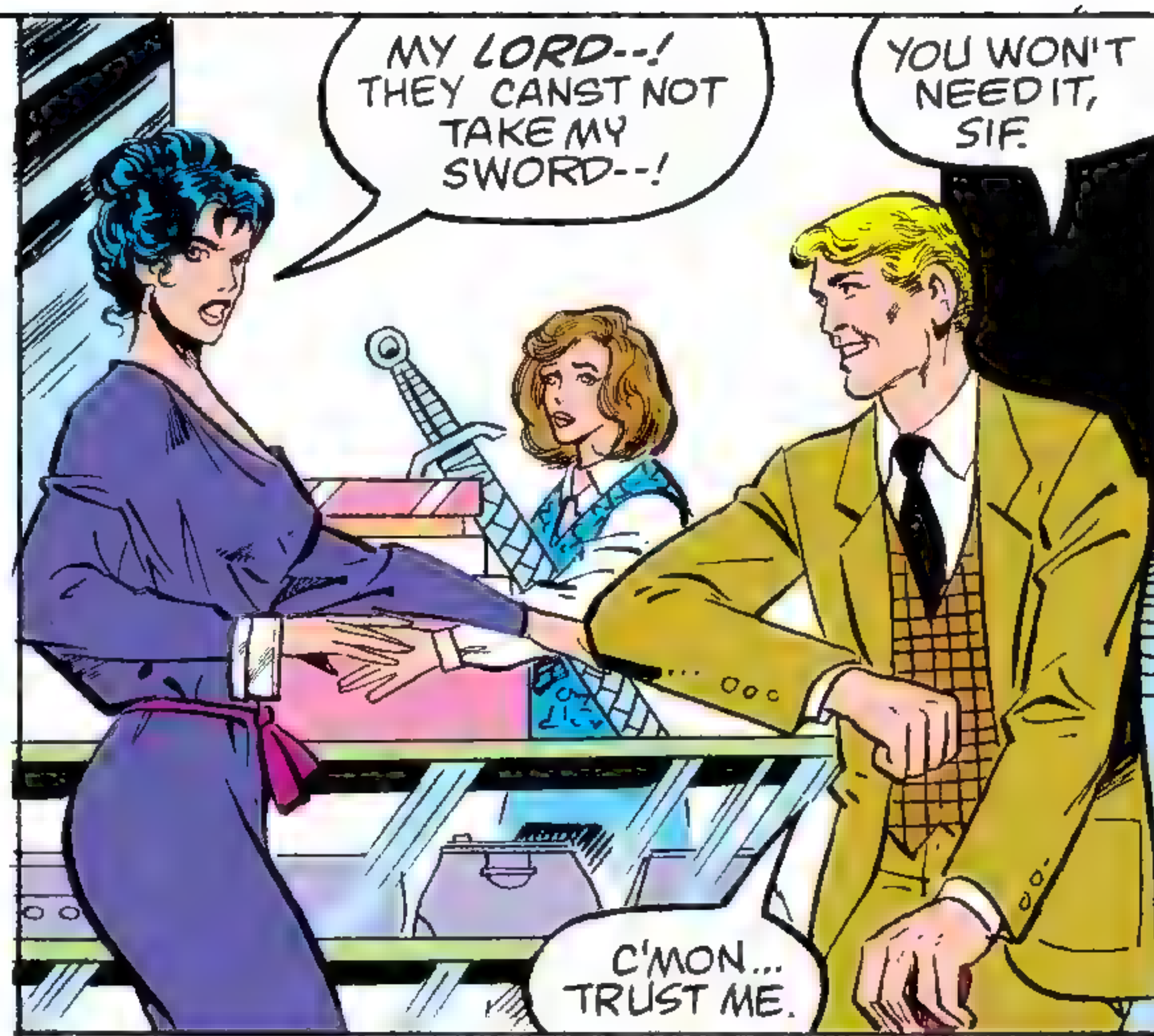
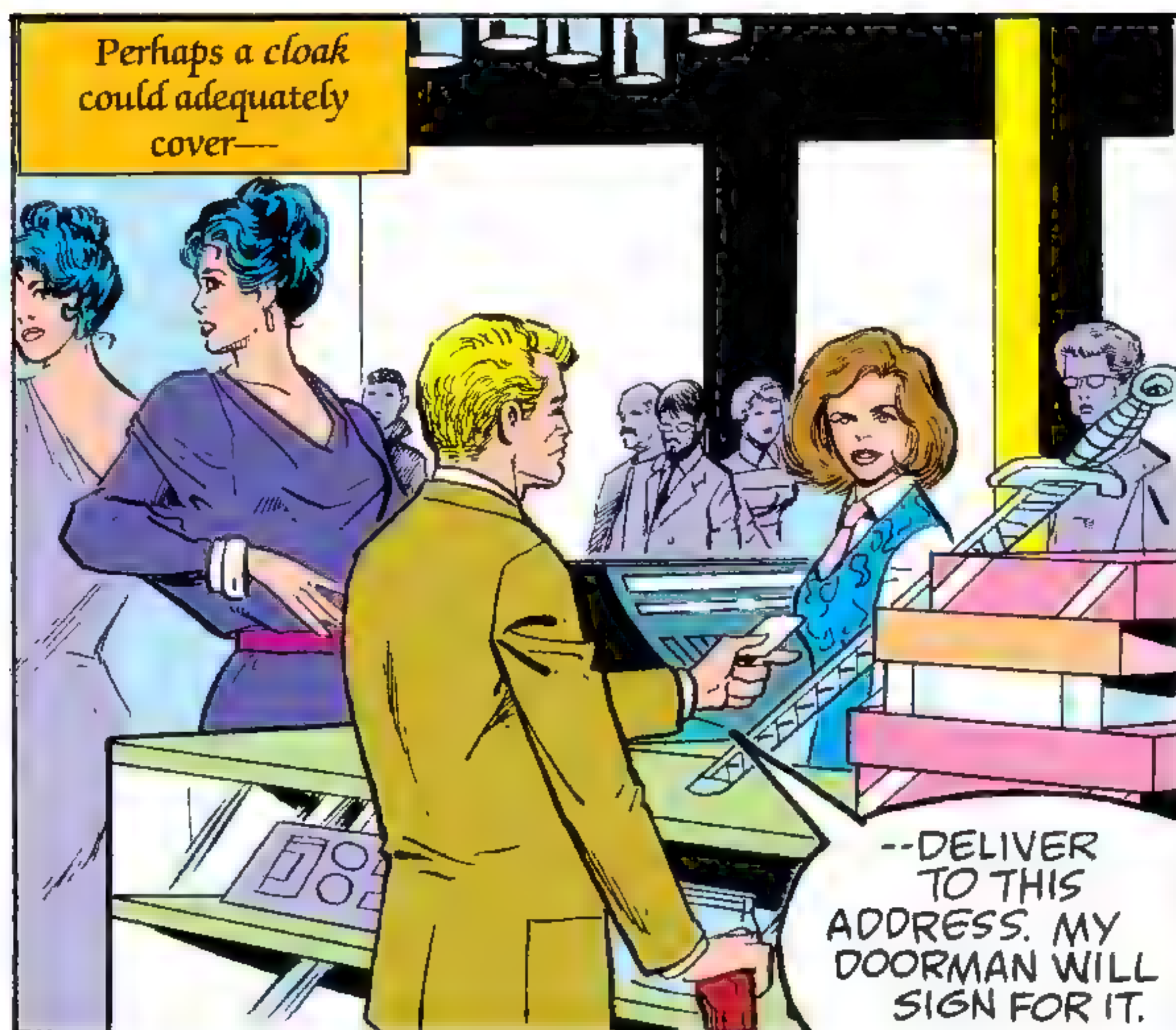
And, throughout this contemptible ordeal—

—My love waits, smiling . . . his eyes approving this charade.

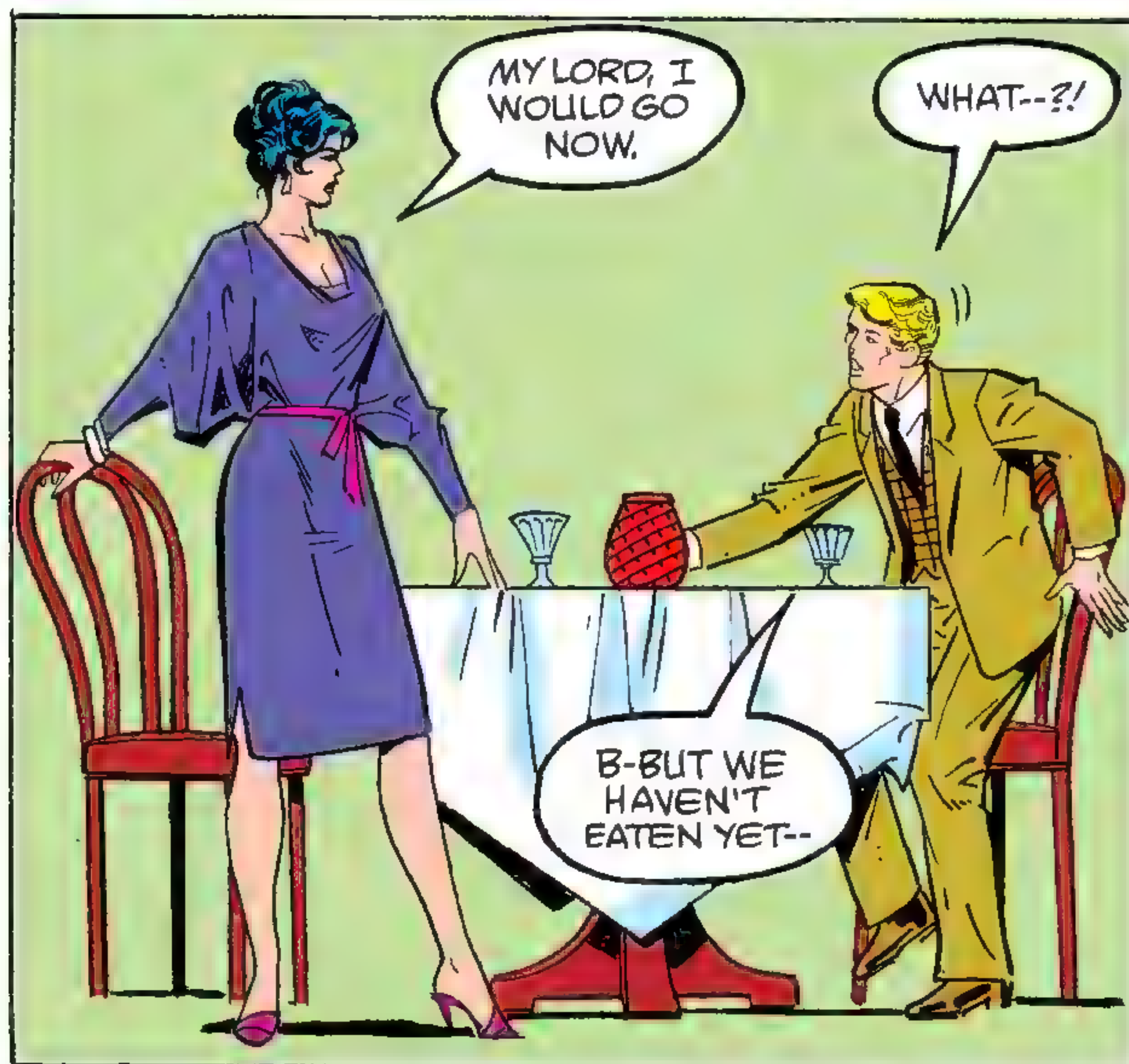
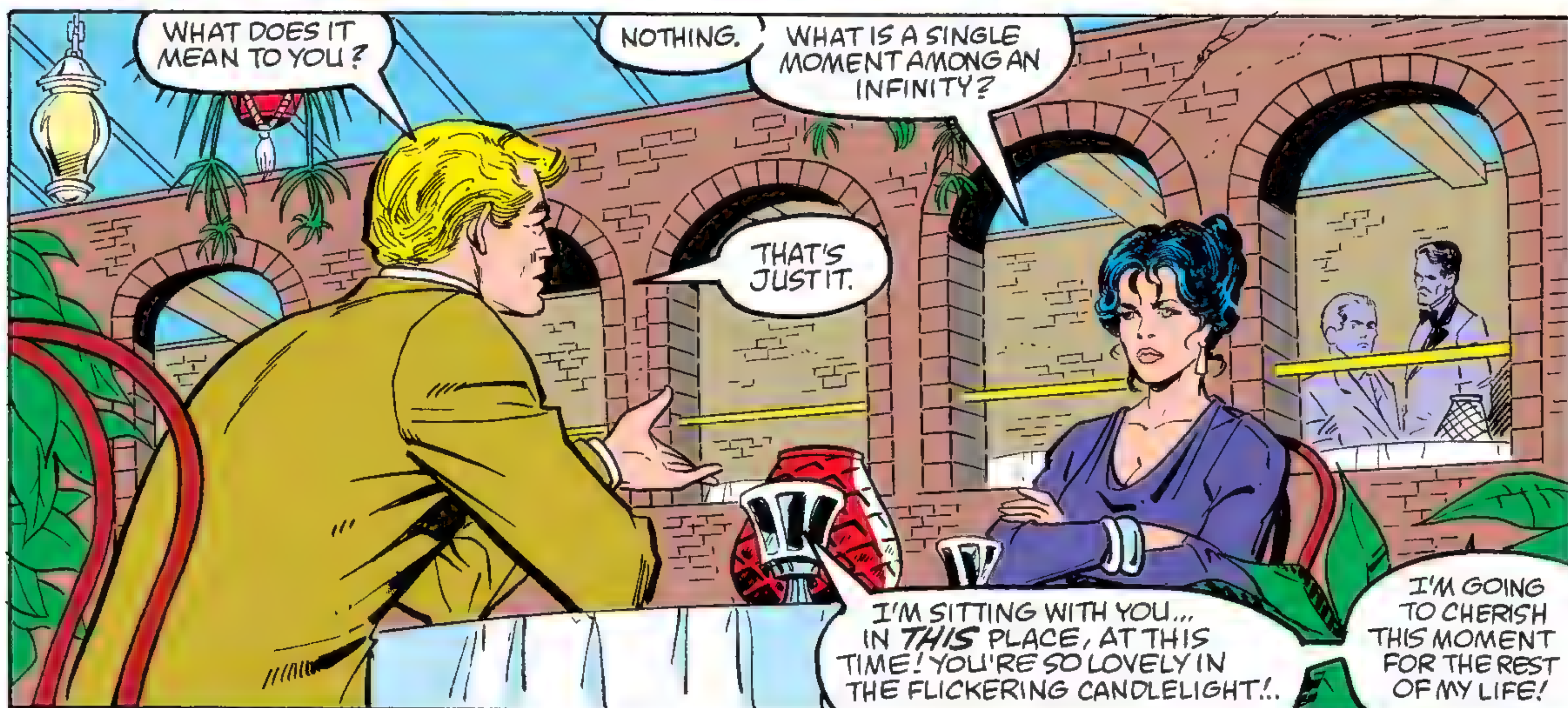
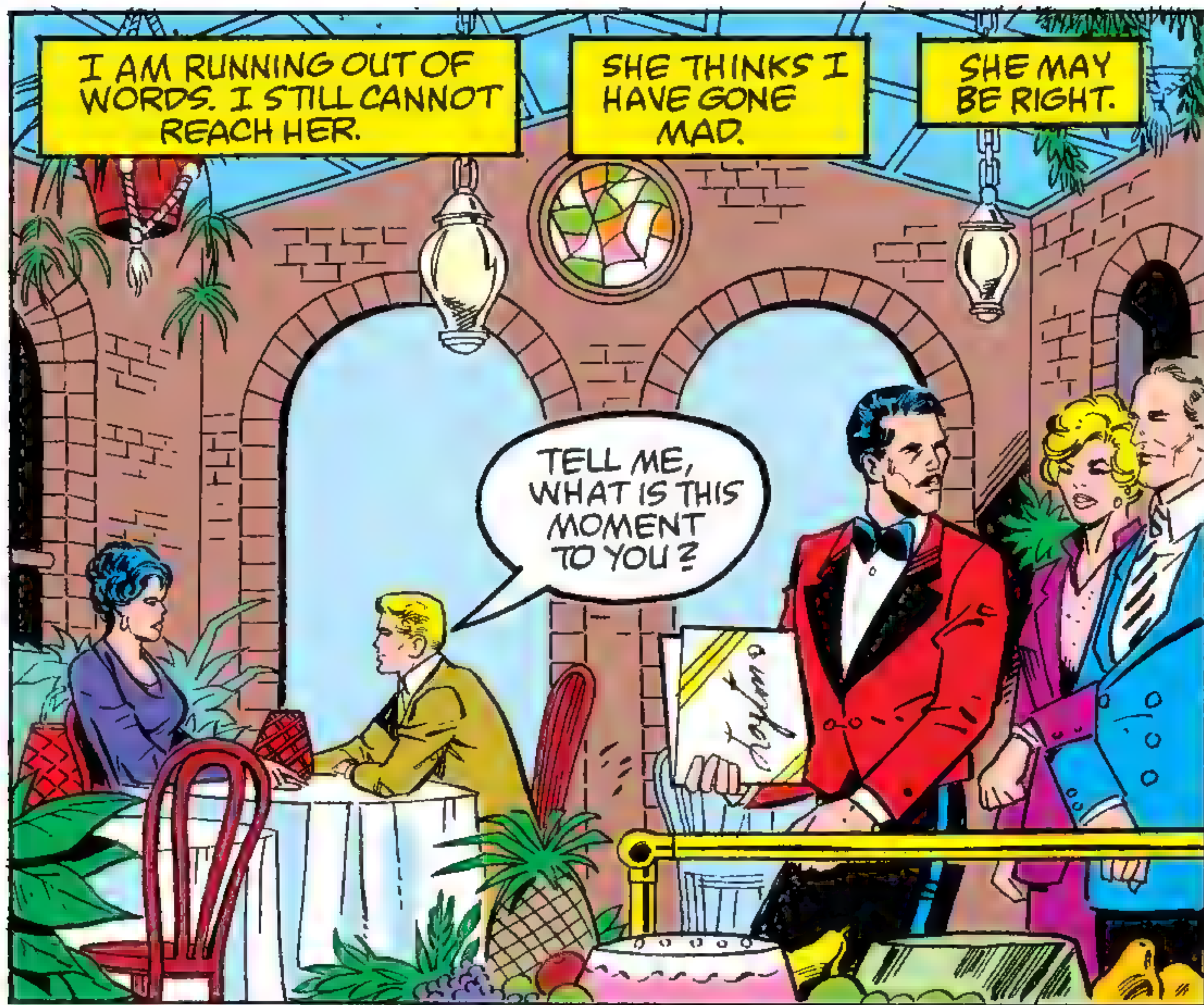
There is much I do not understand. I know only that my heart forever belongs to him. And, if I must suffer this indignity to please him . . .

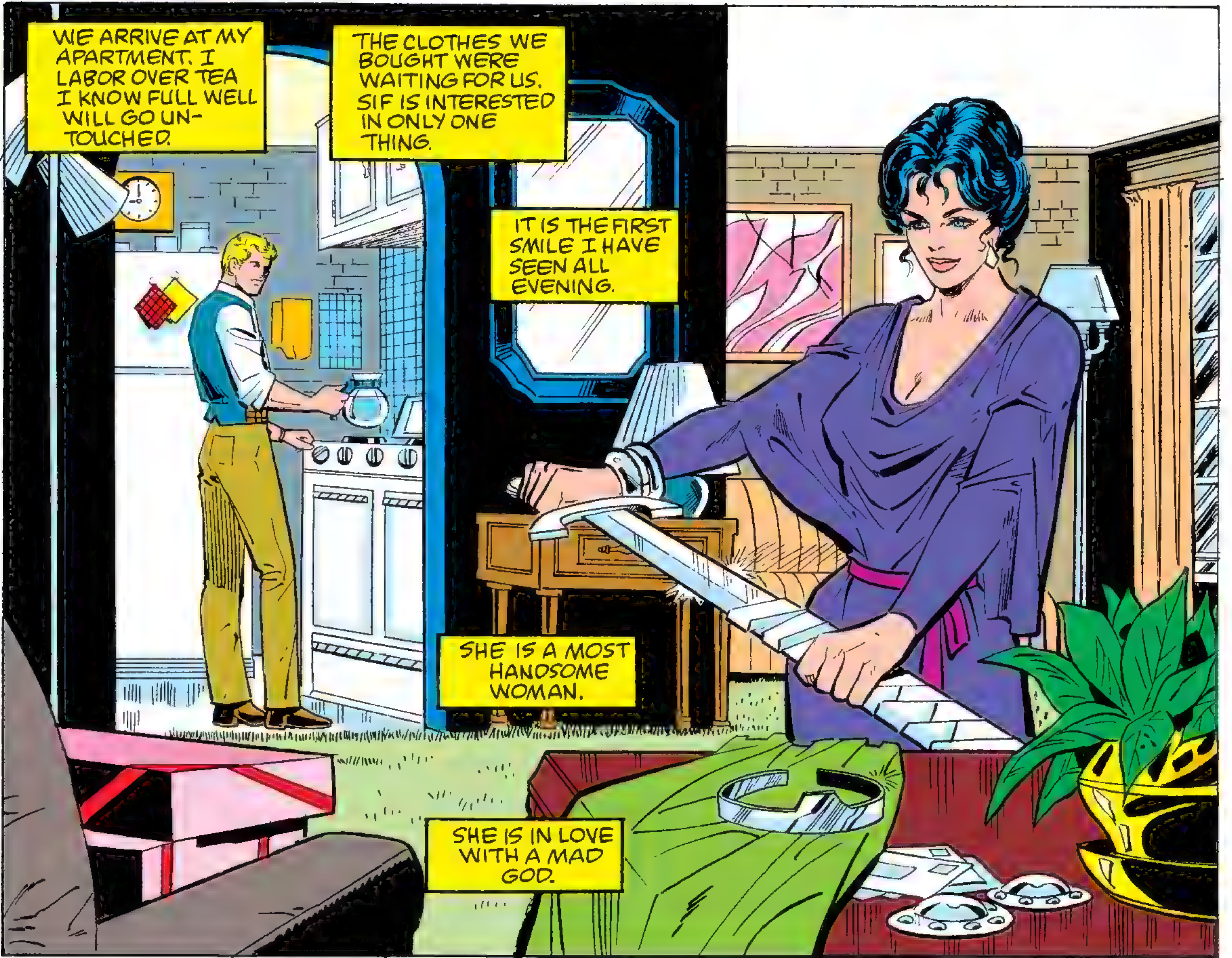
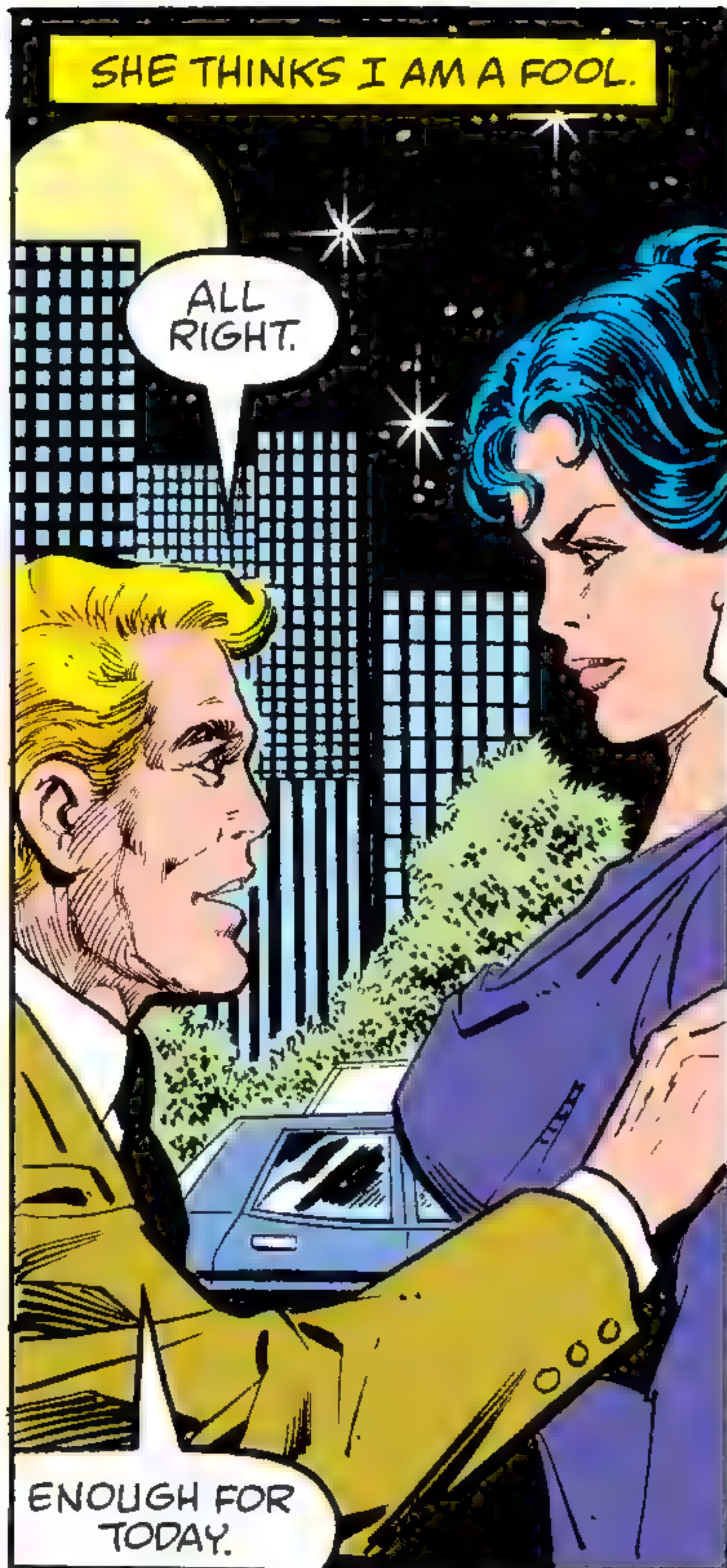
. . . then suffer it I will.

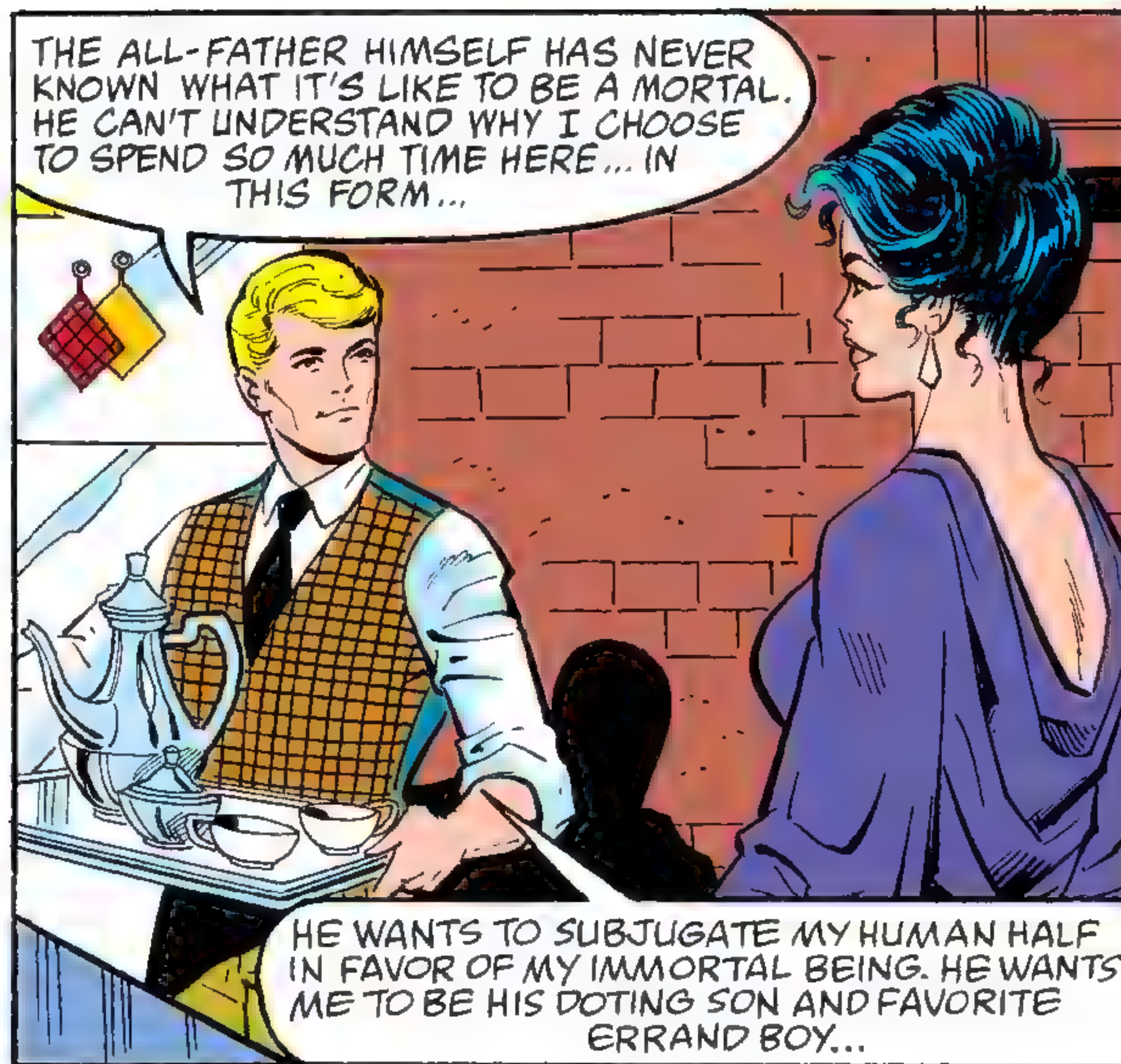
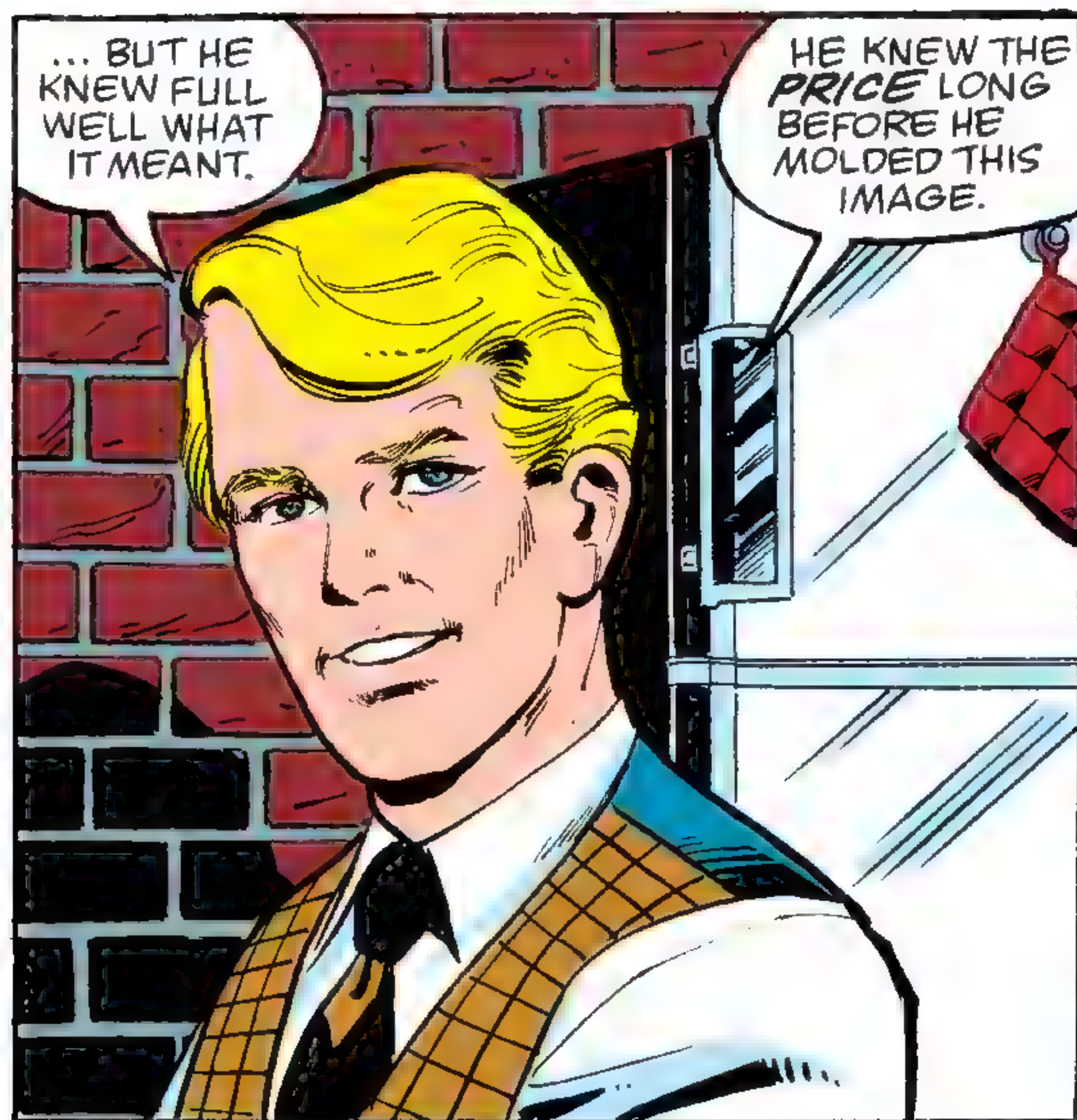
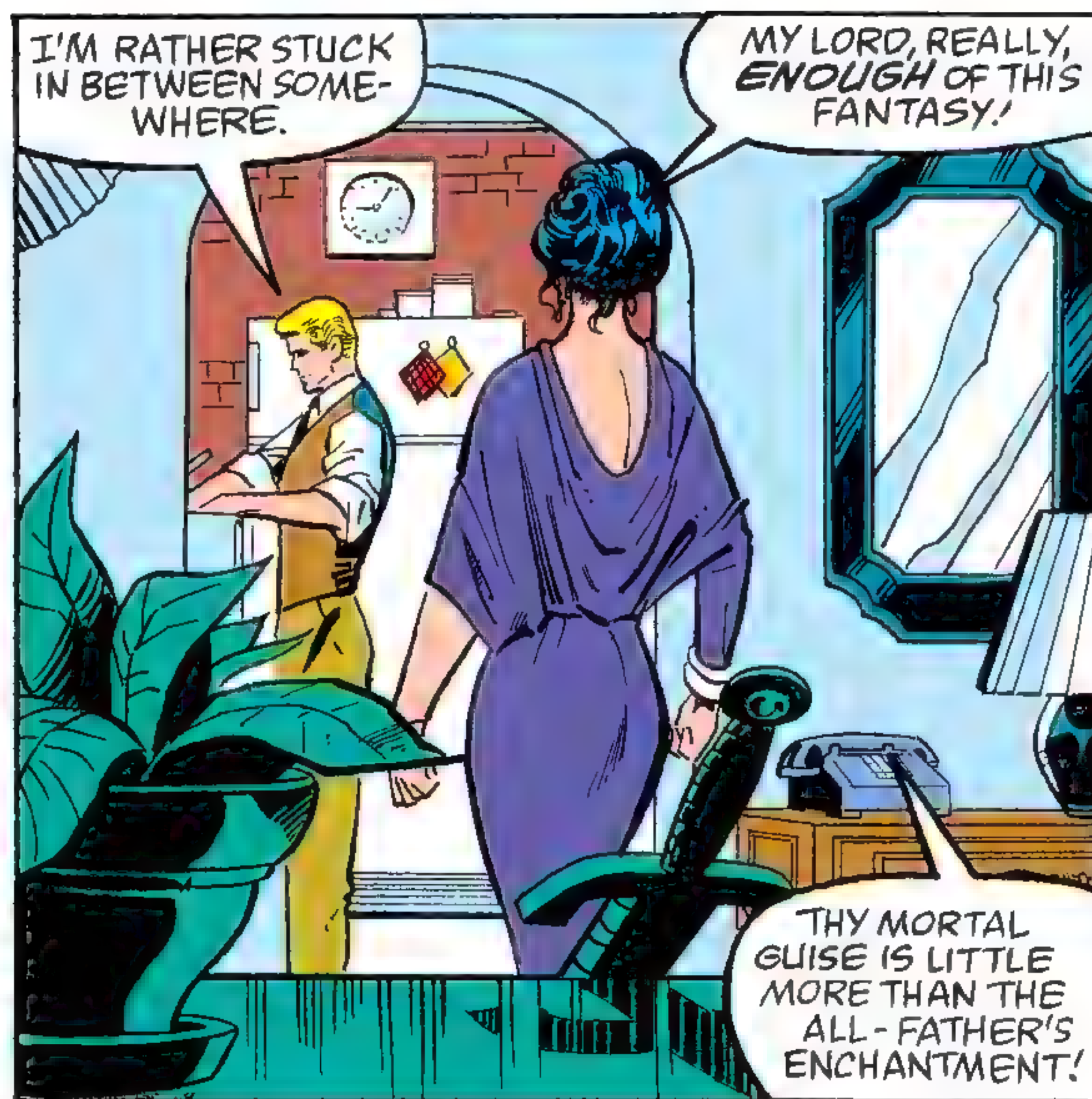












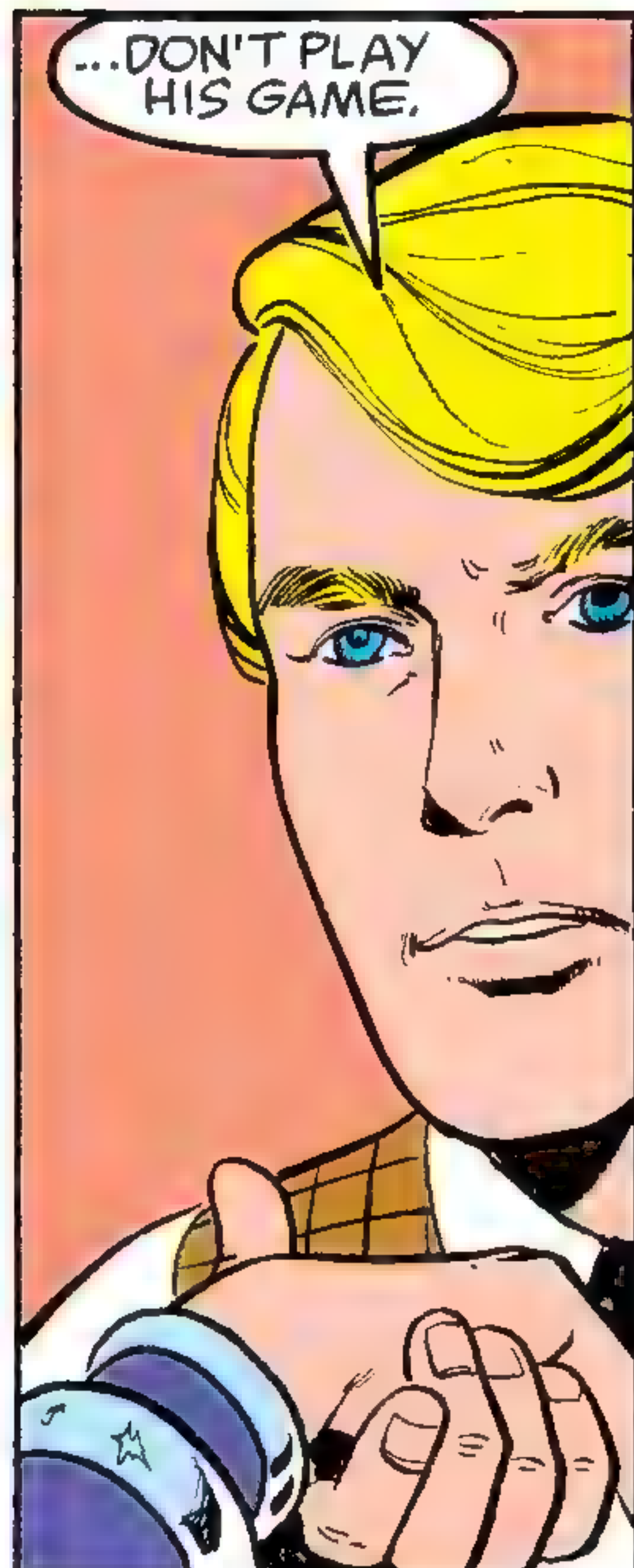
... AND HE'S COUNTING ON YOU TO BRING THAT TO PASS. HE'S COUNTING ON YOUR LOVE FOR ME... YOUR *INNOCENCE*...



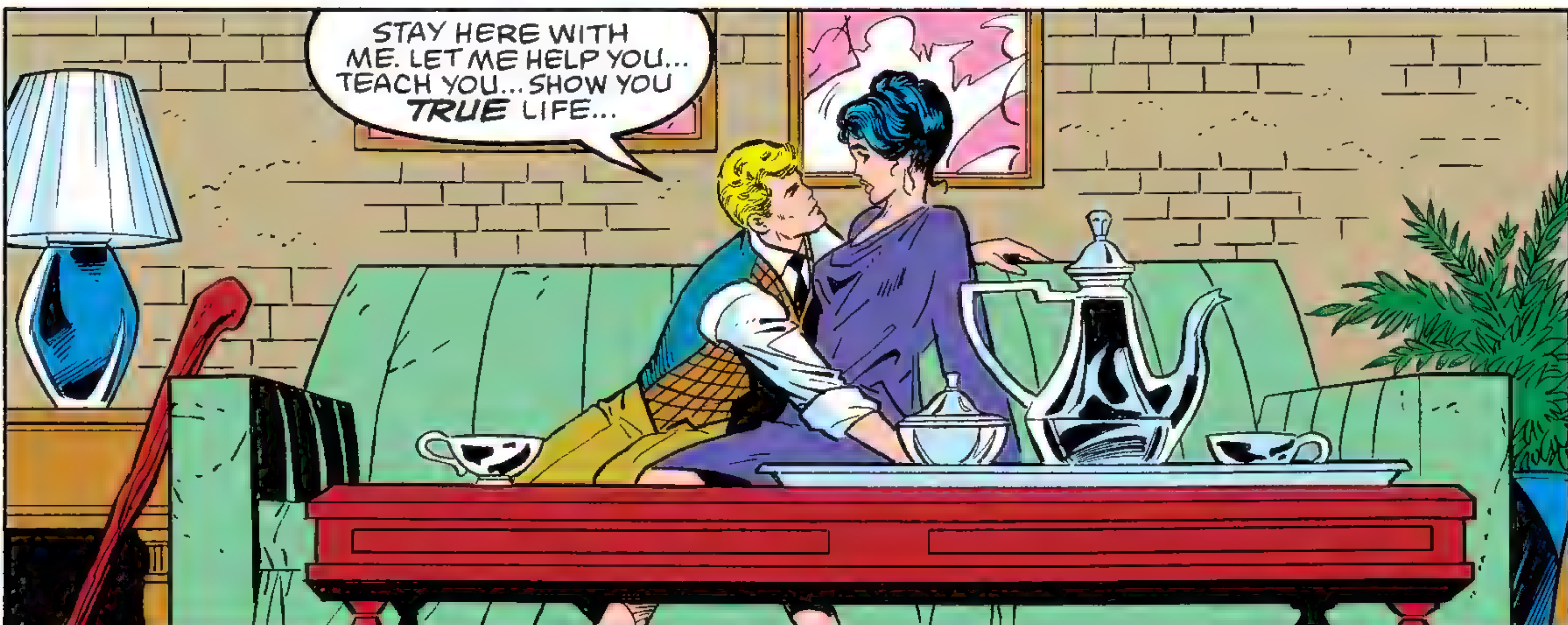
...SIF...



...DON'T PLAY HIS GAME.



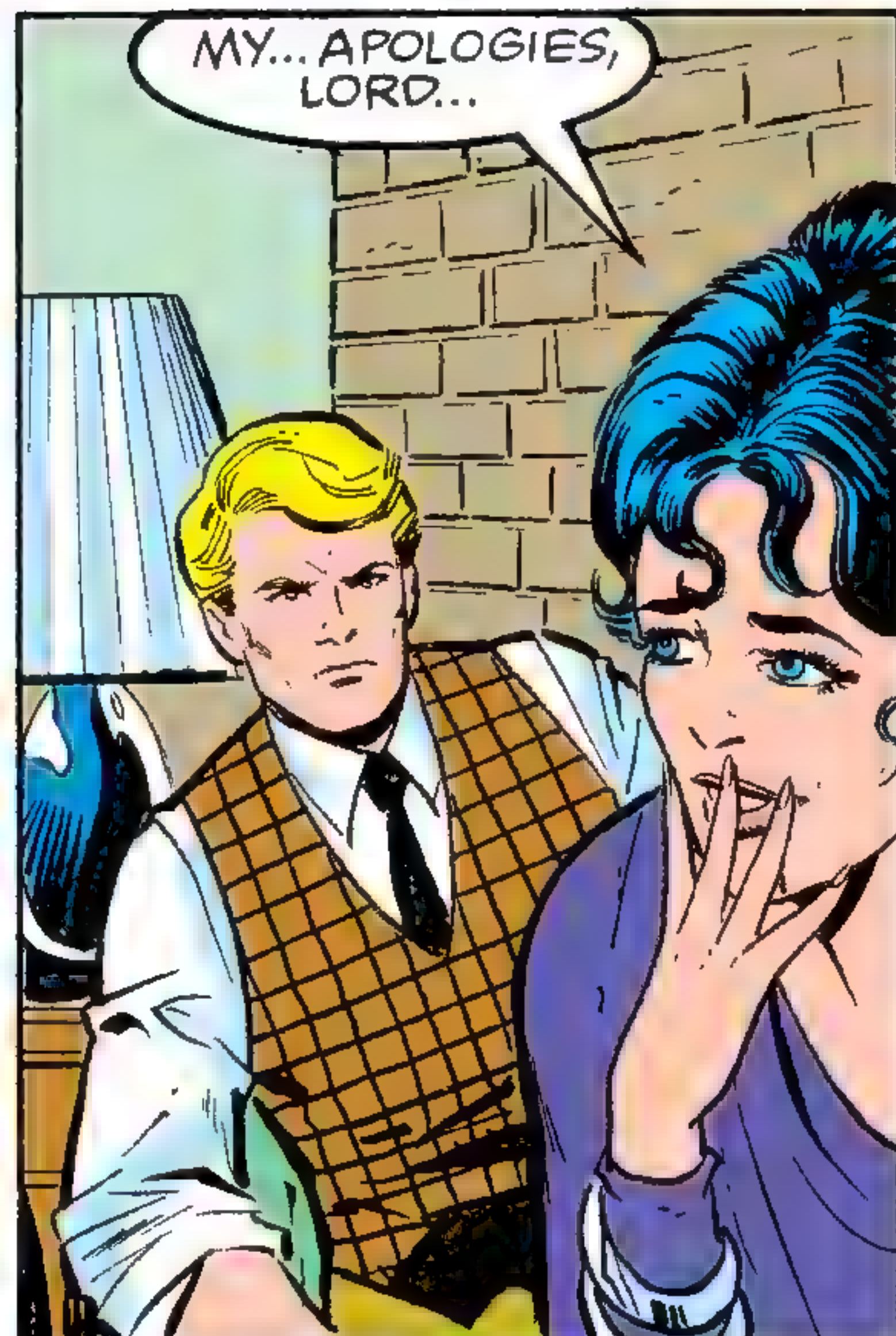
STAY HERE WITH ME. LET ME HELP YOU... TEACH YOU... SHOW YOU *TRUE* LIFE...

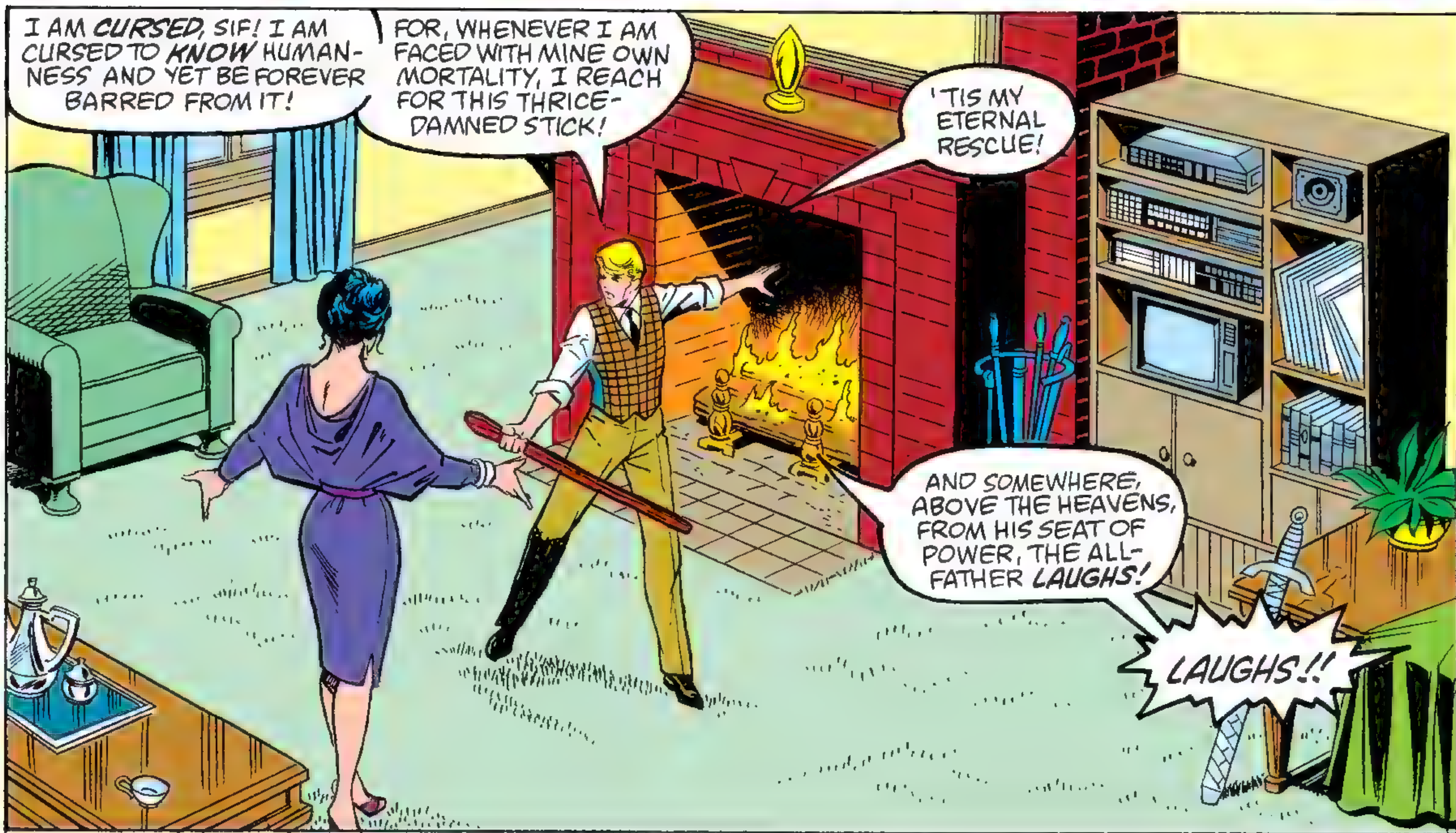
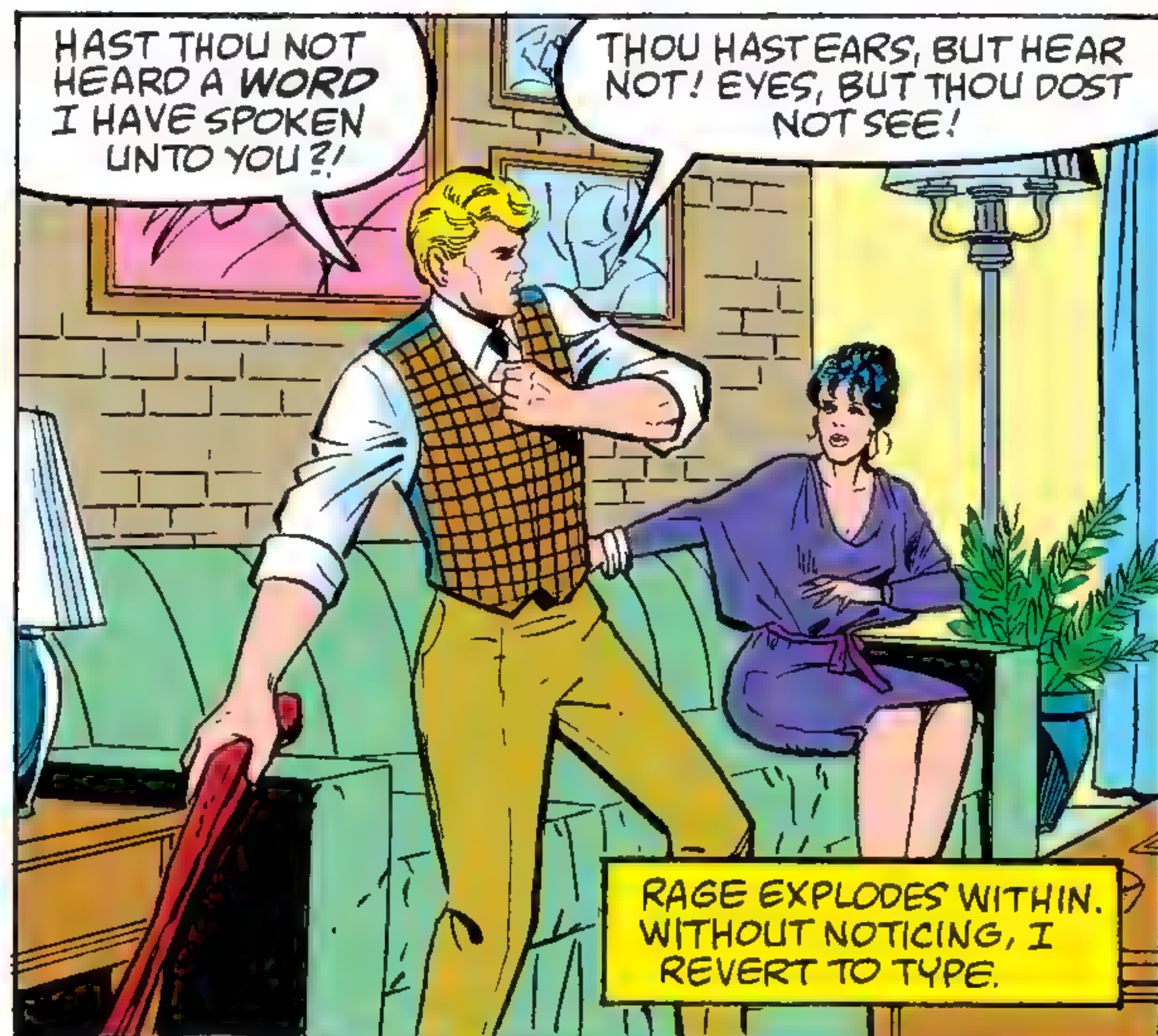
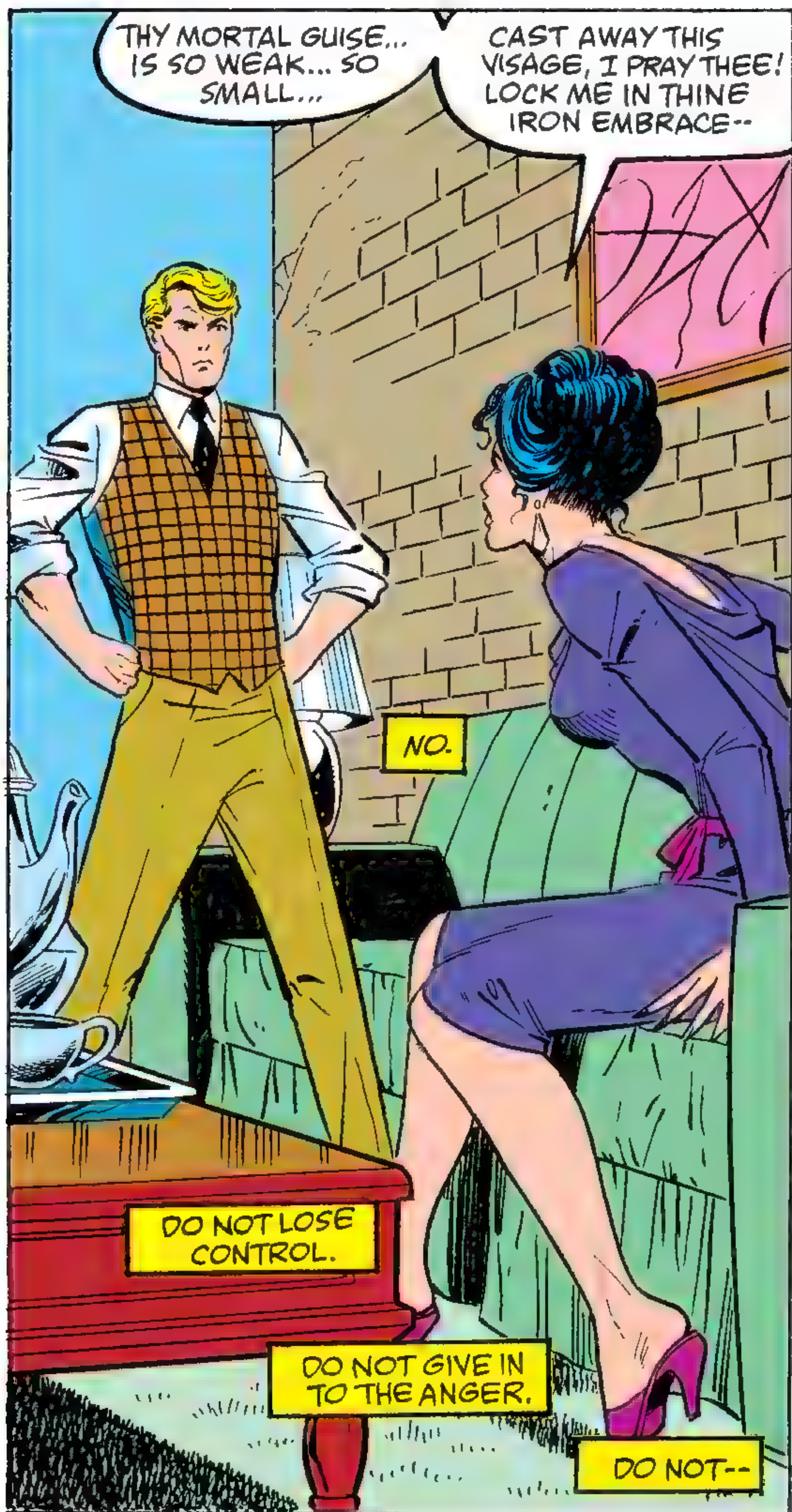


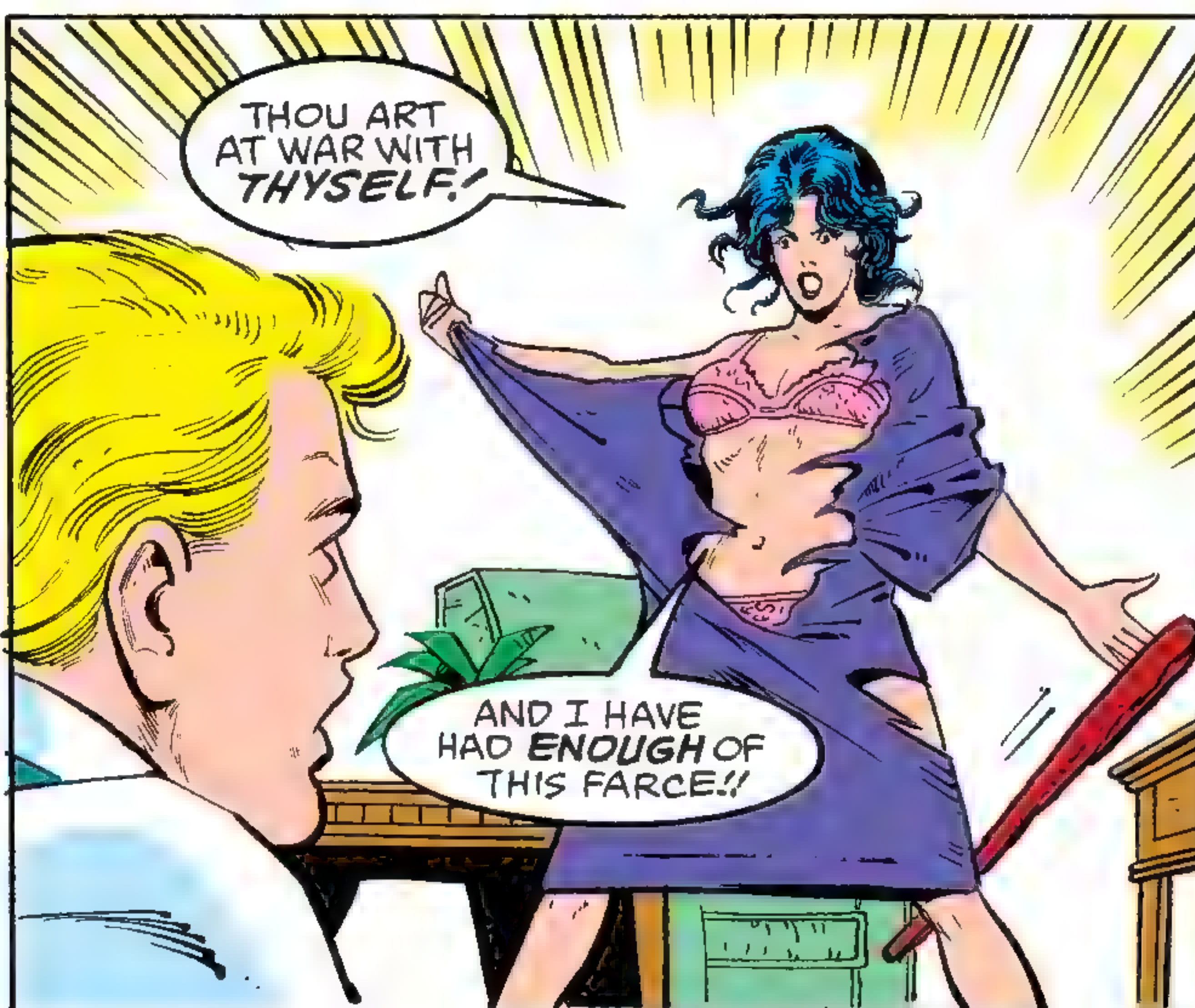
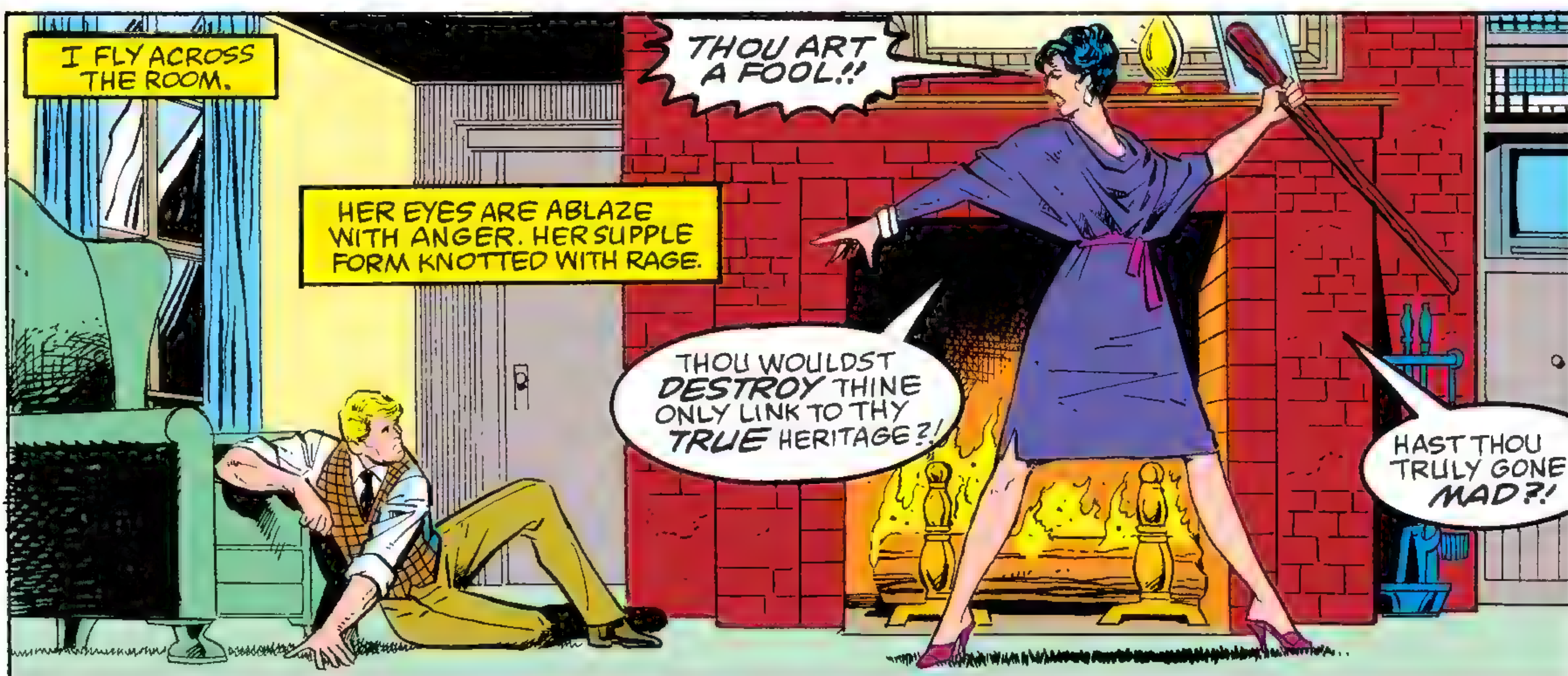
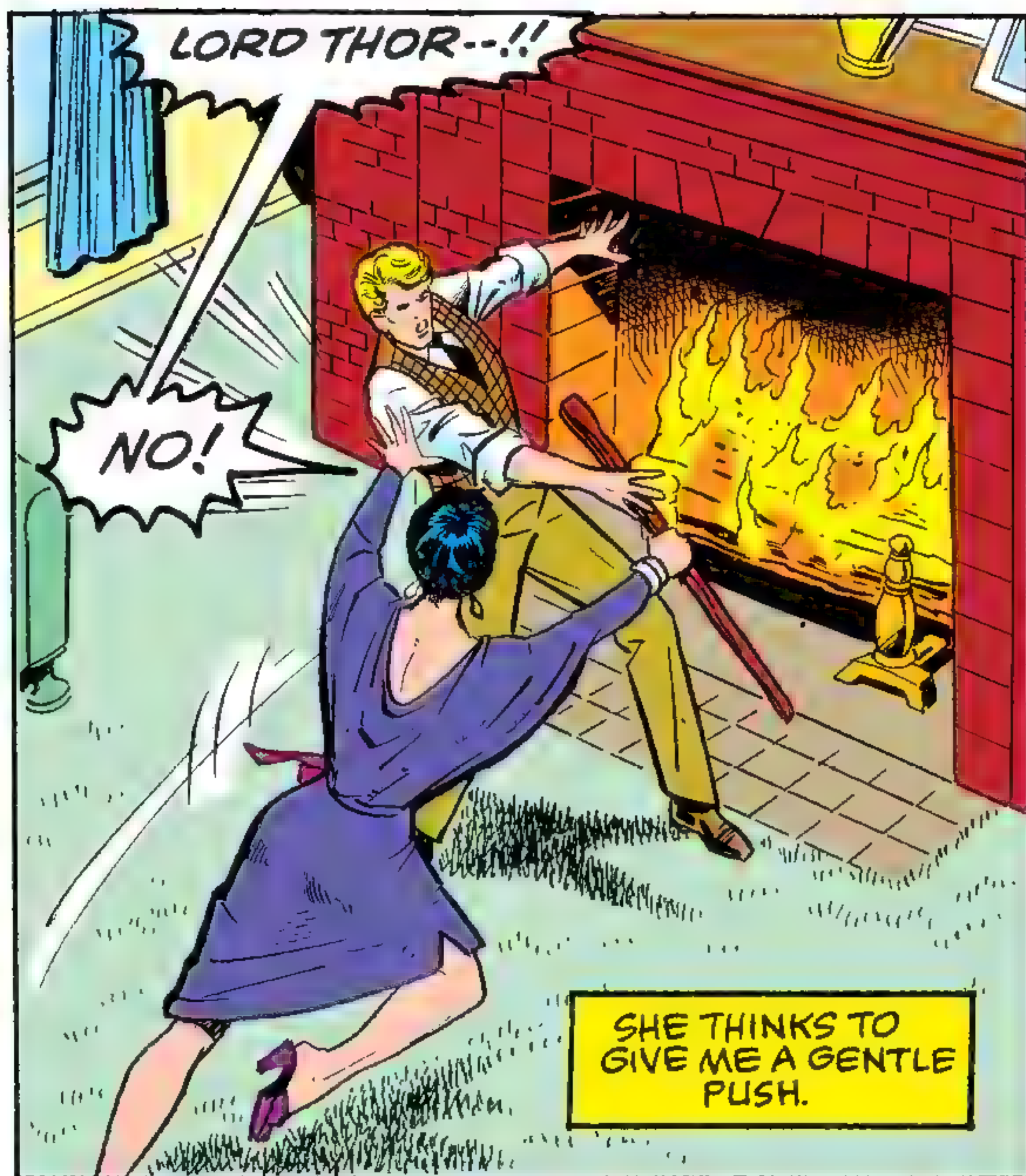
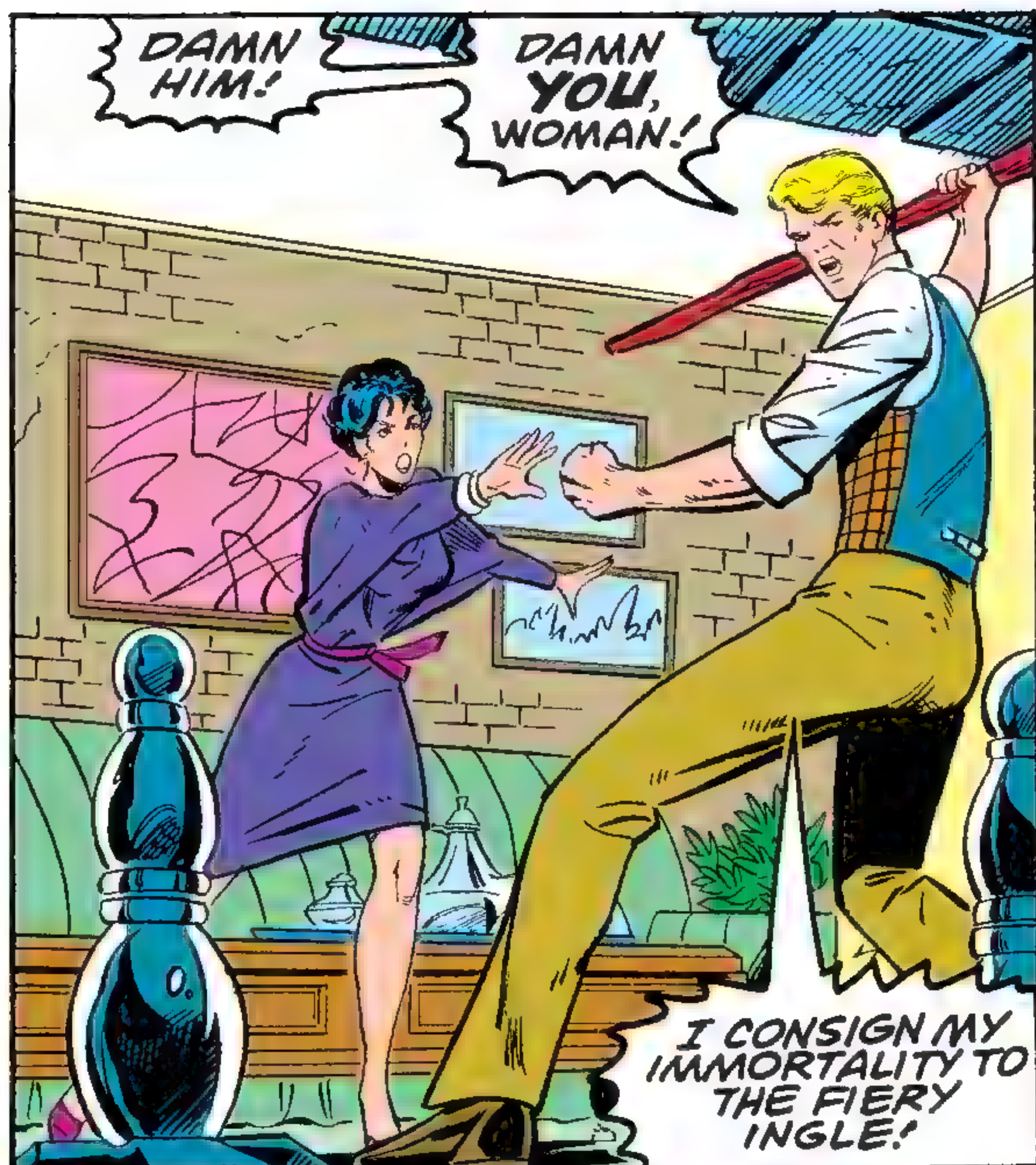
...TRUE LOVE...

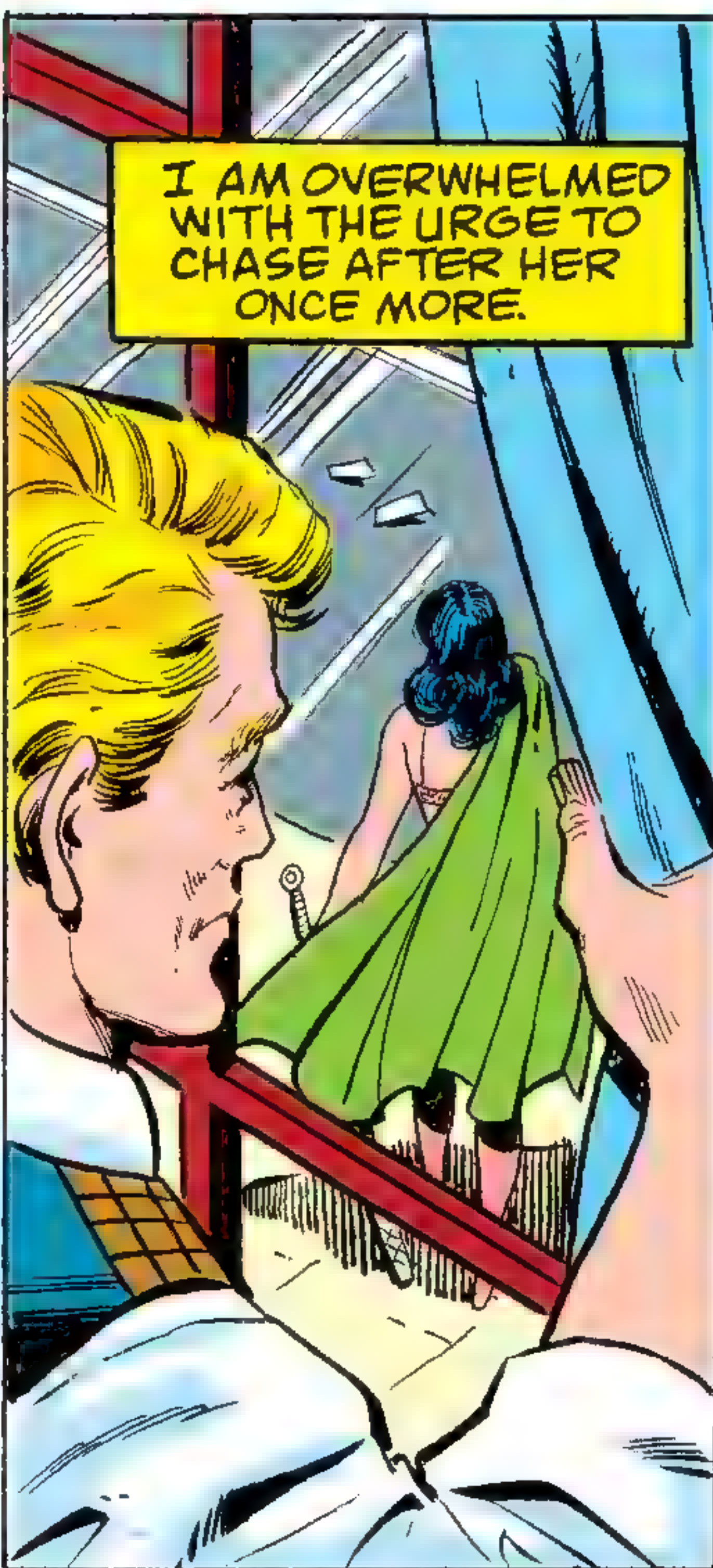
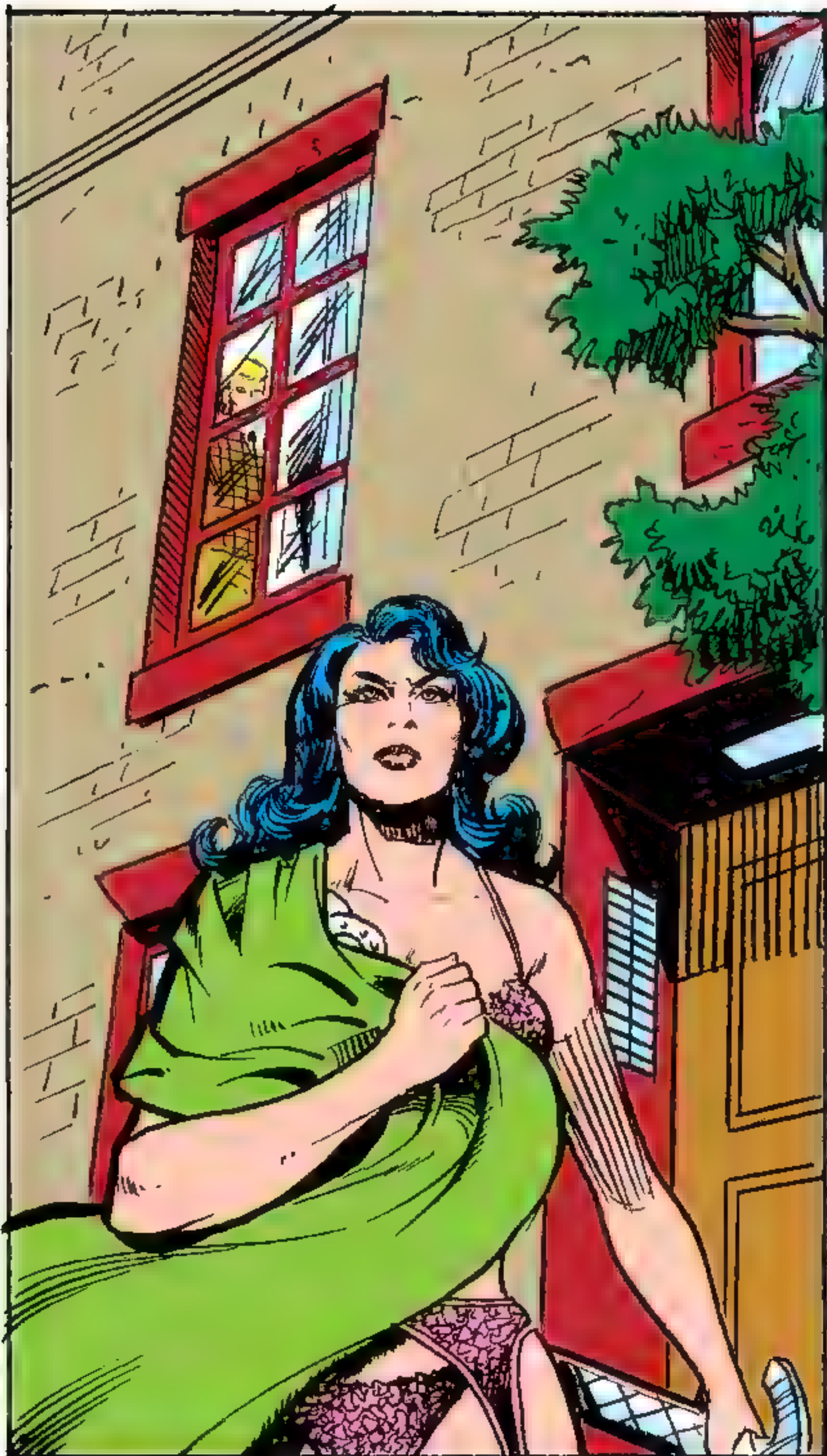
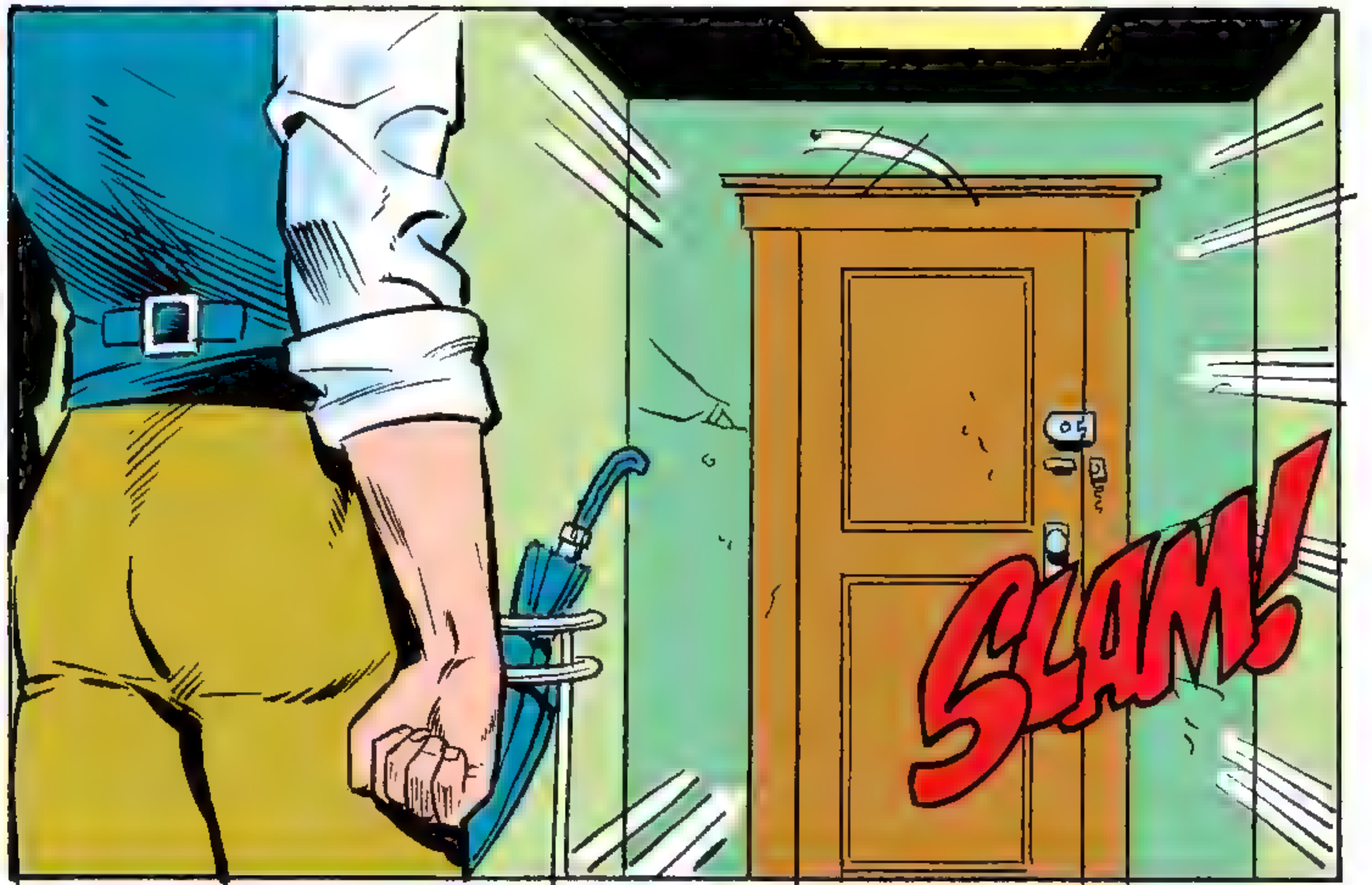
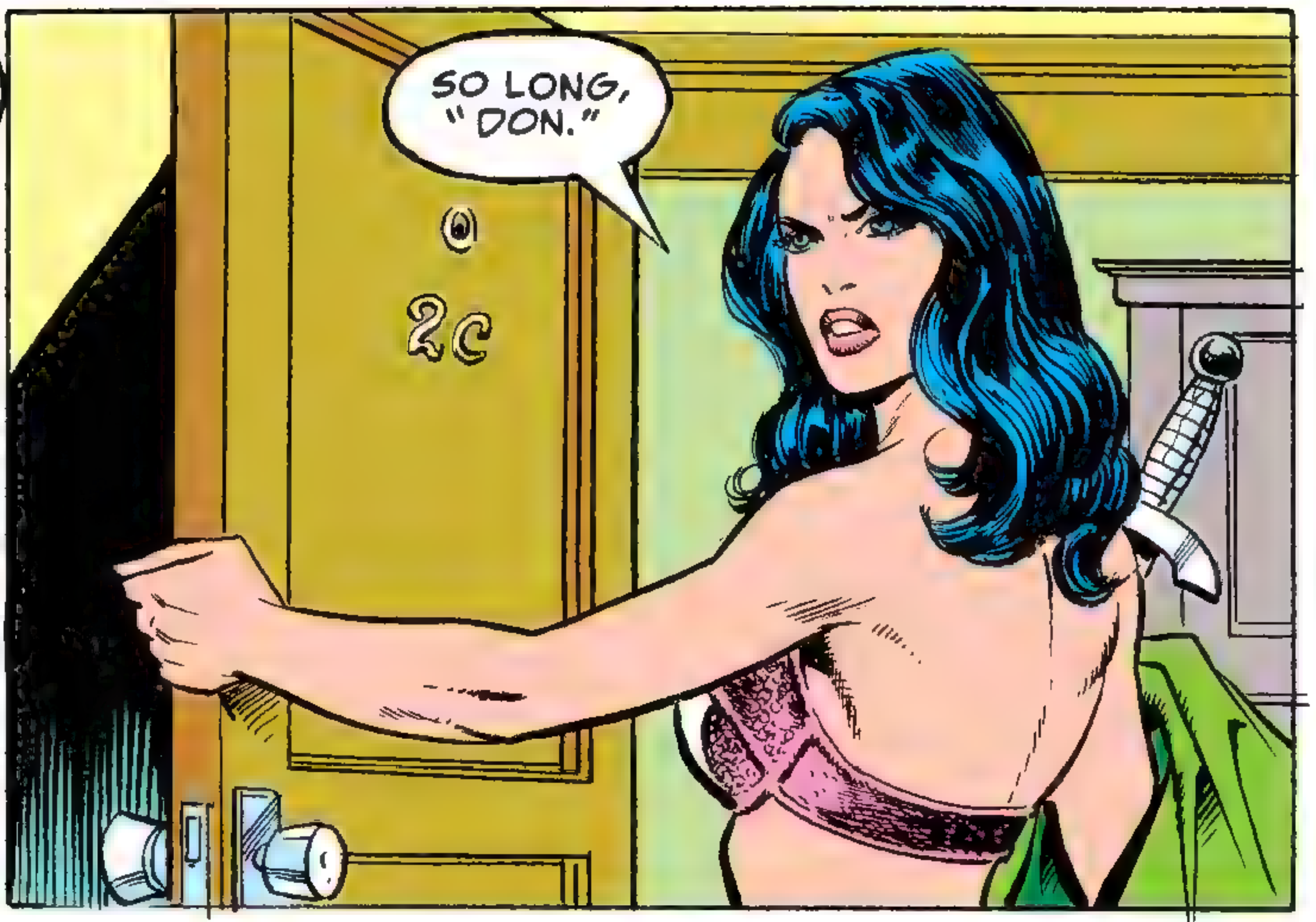


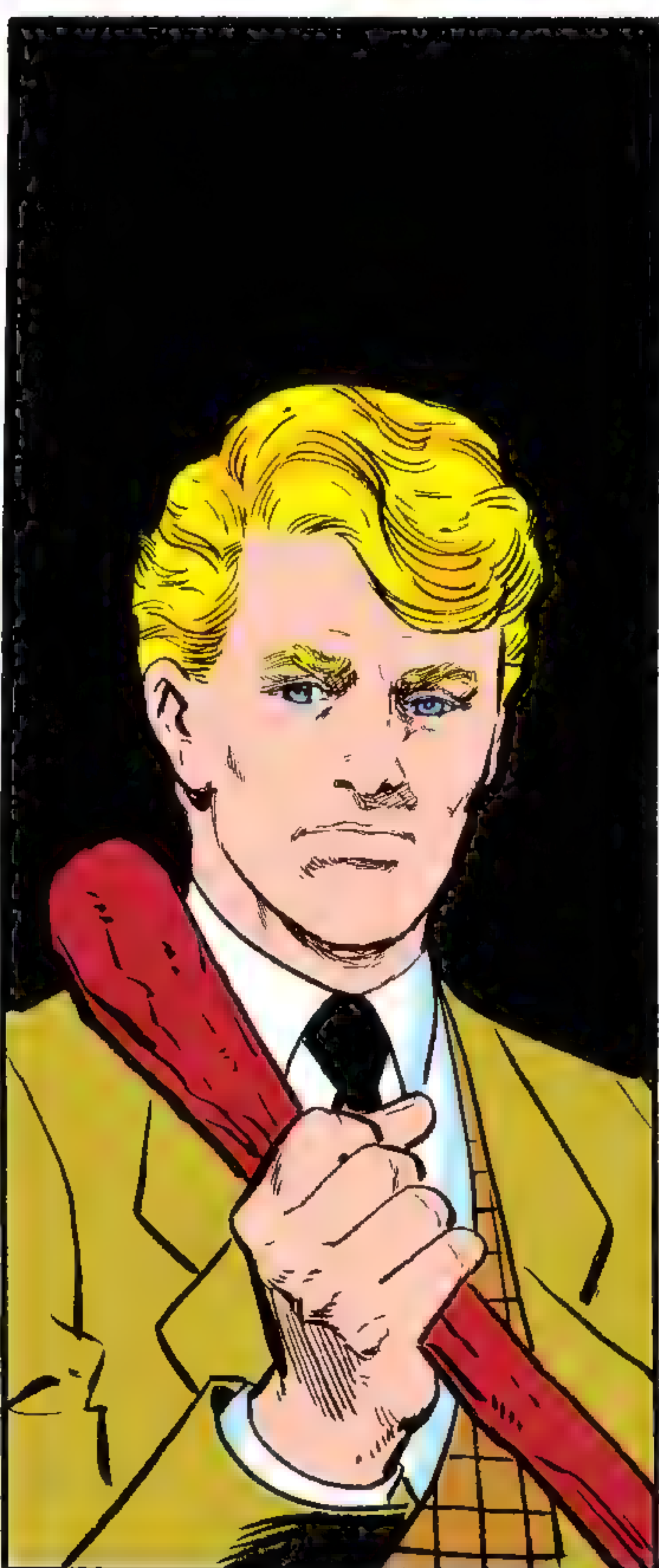
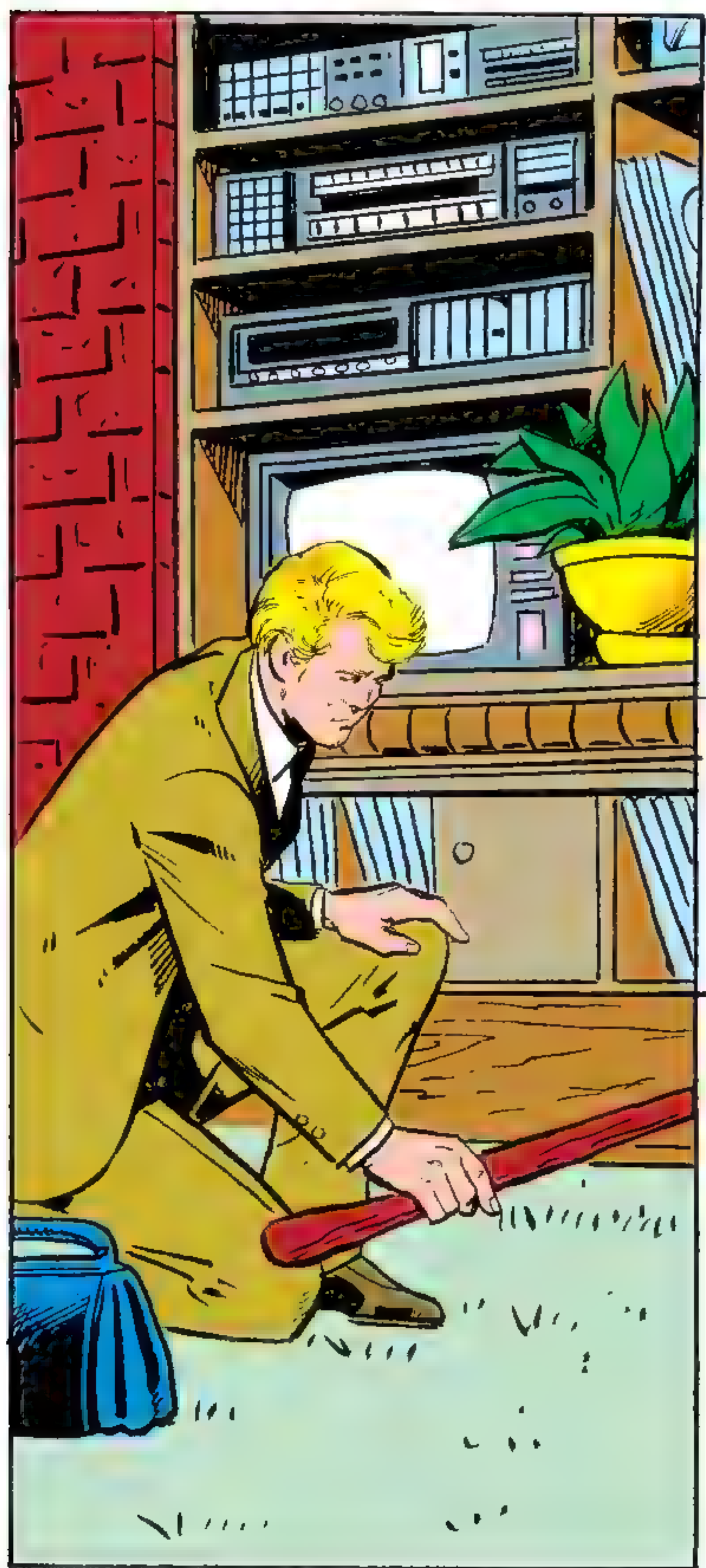
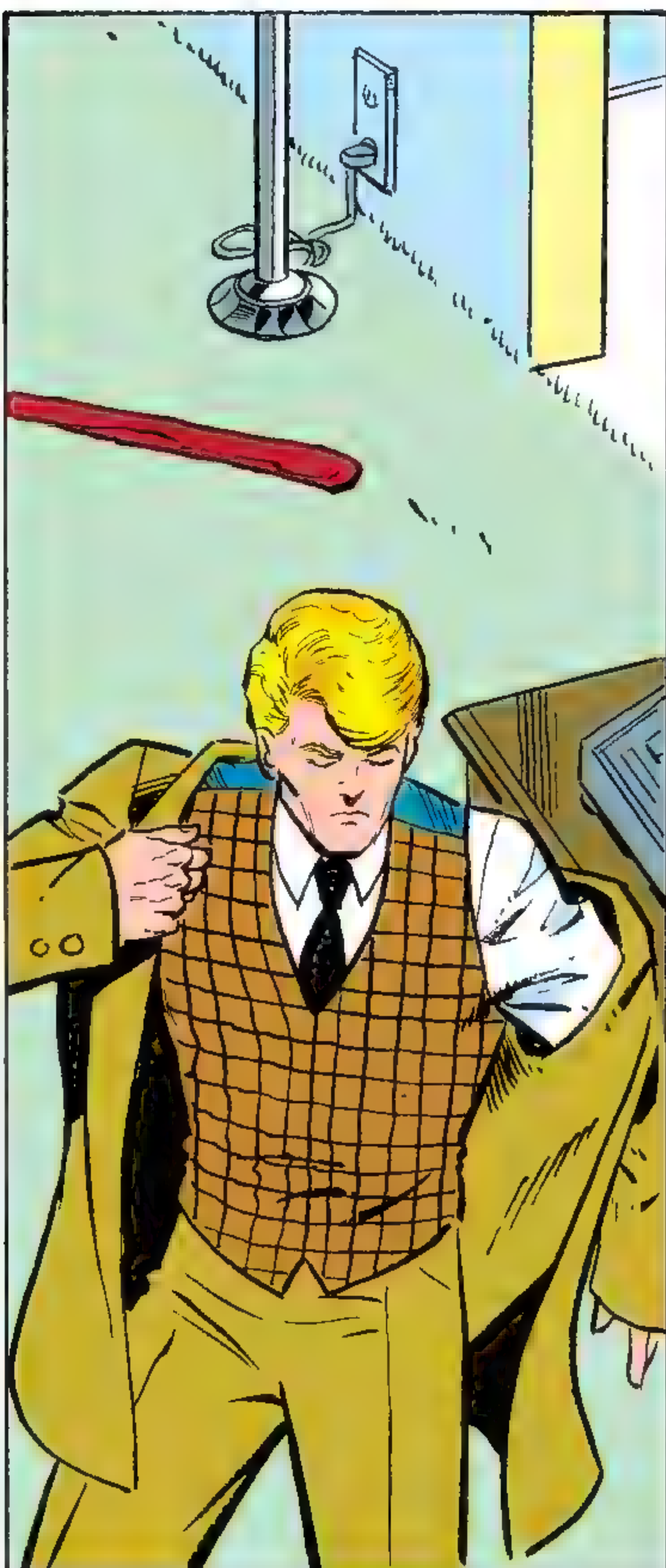
MY... APOLOGIES, LORD...

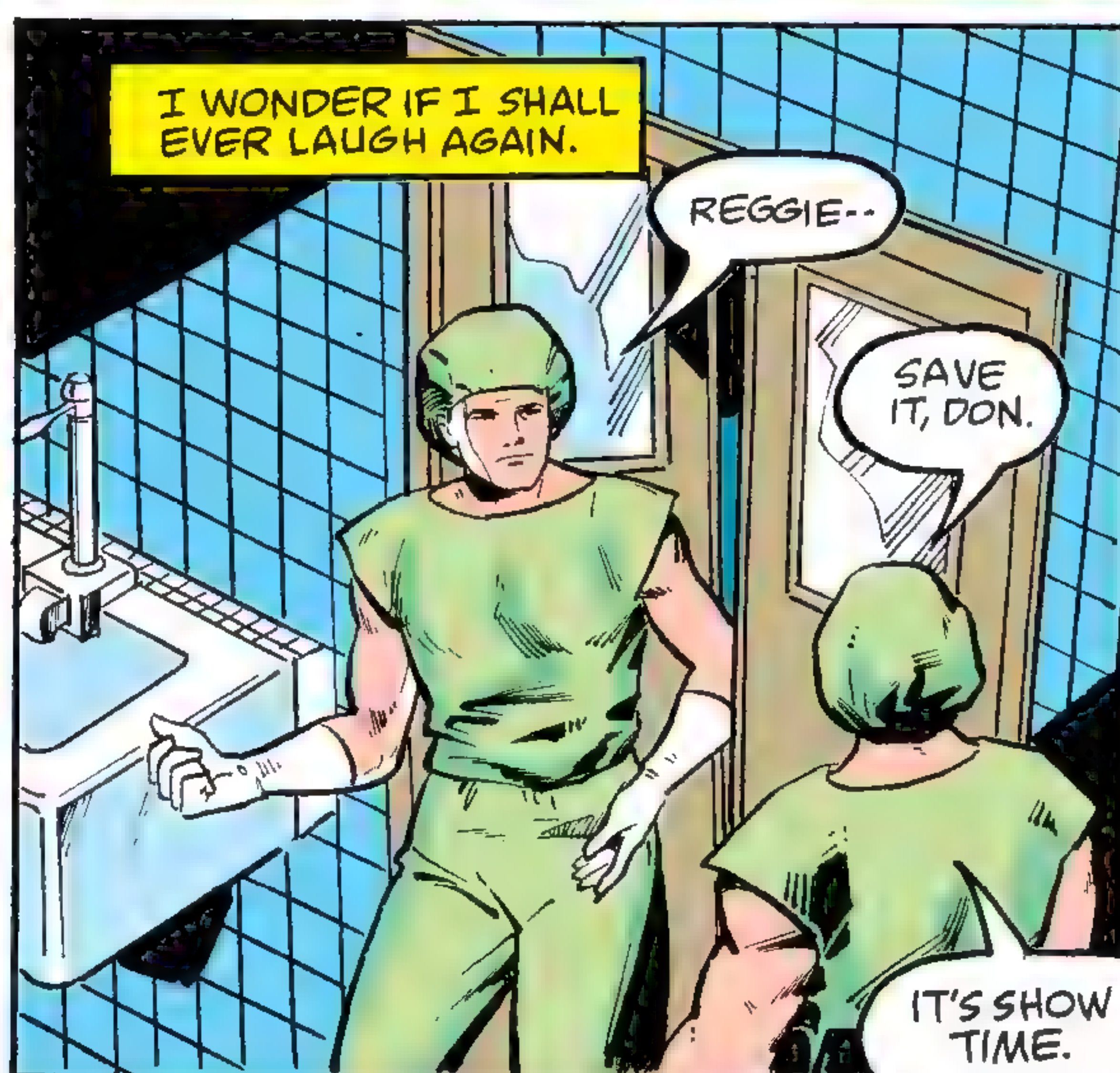
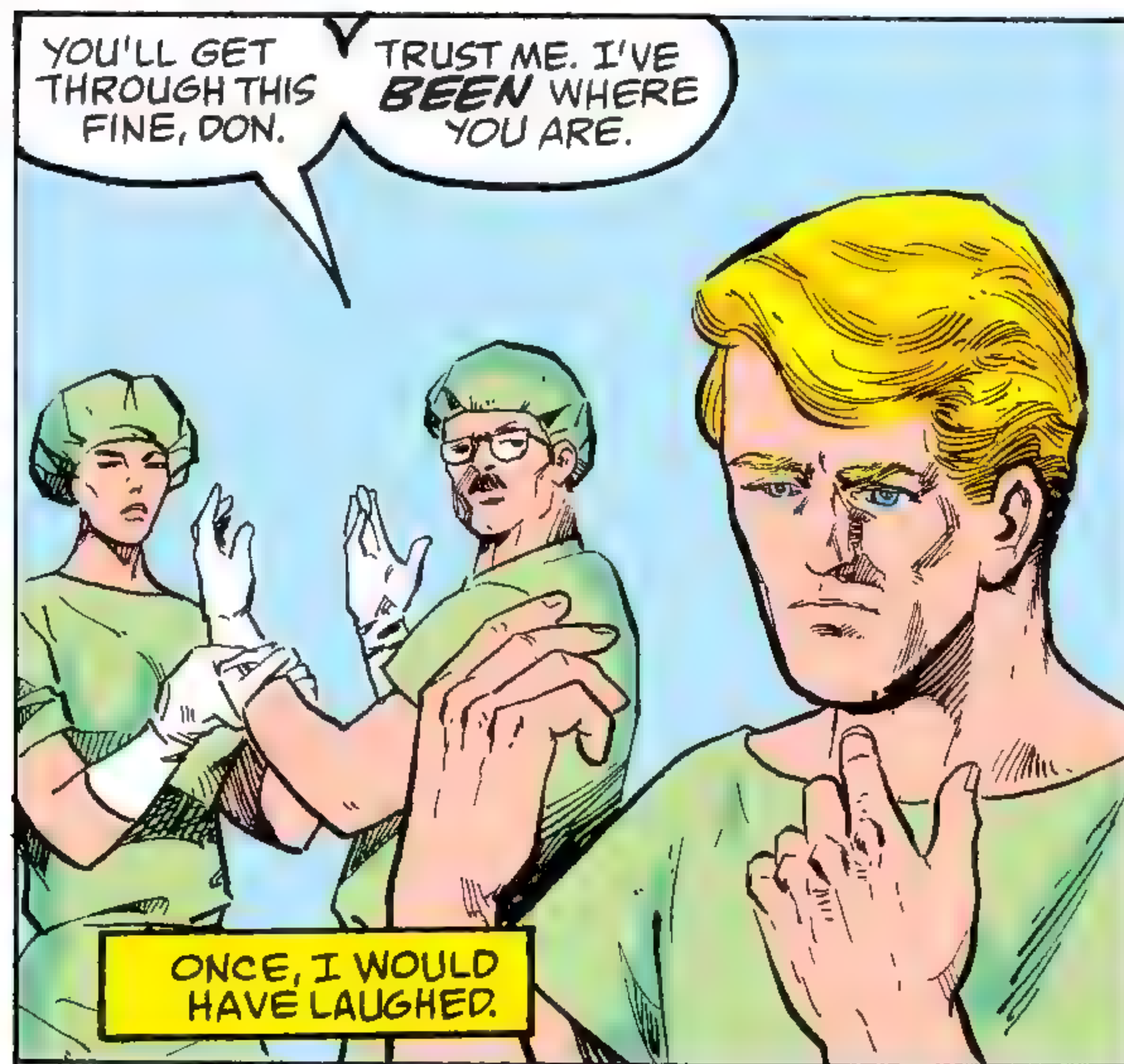
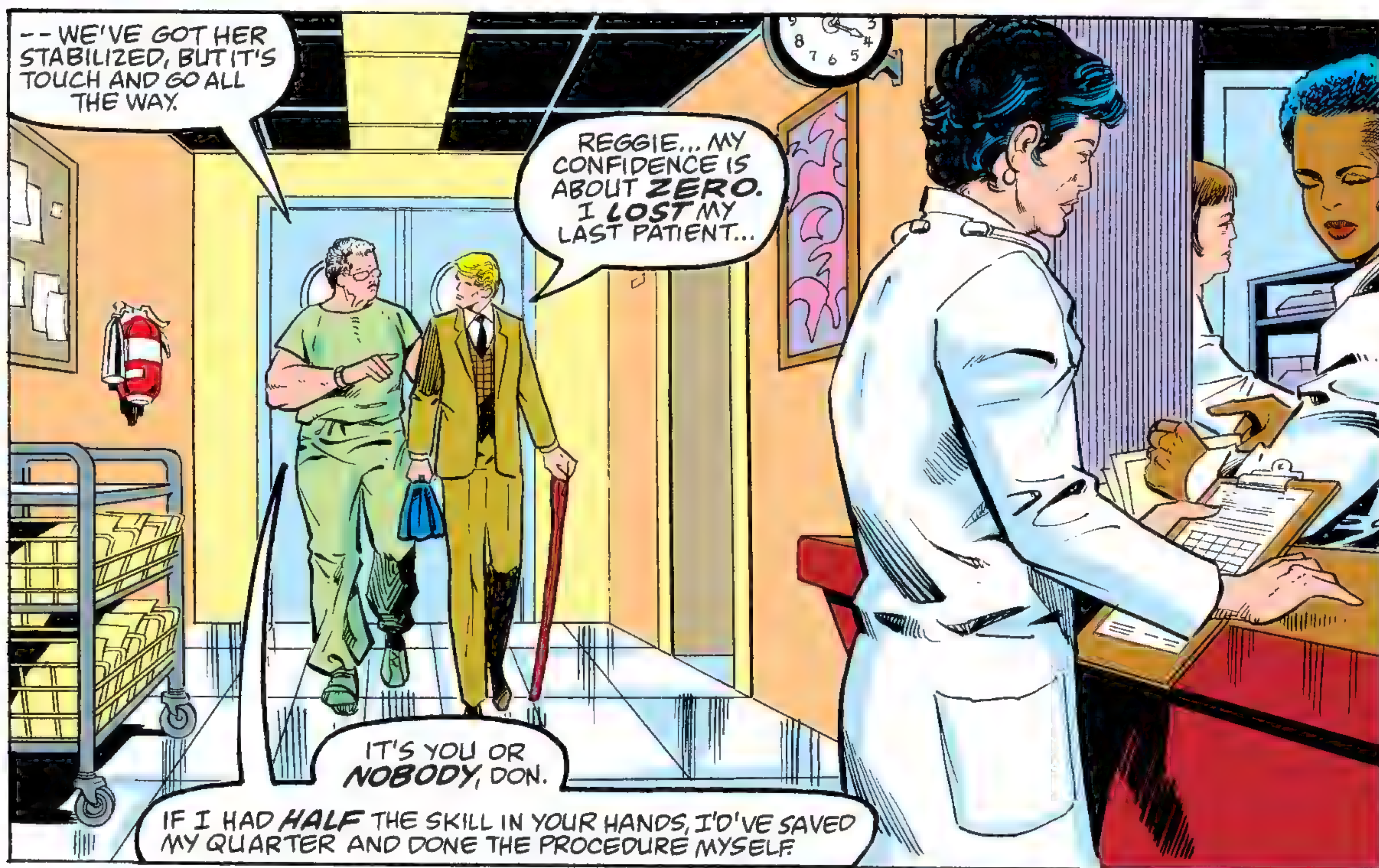


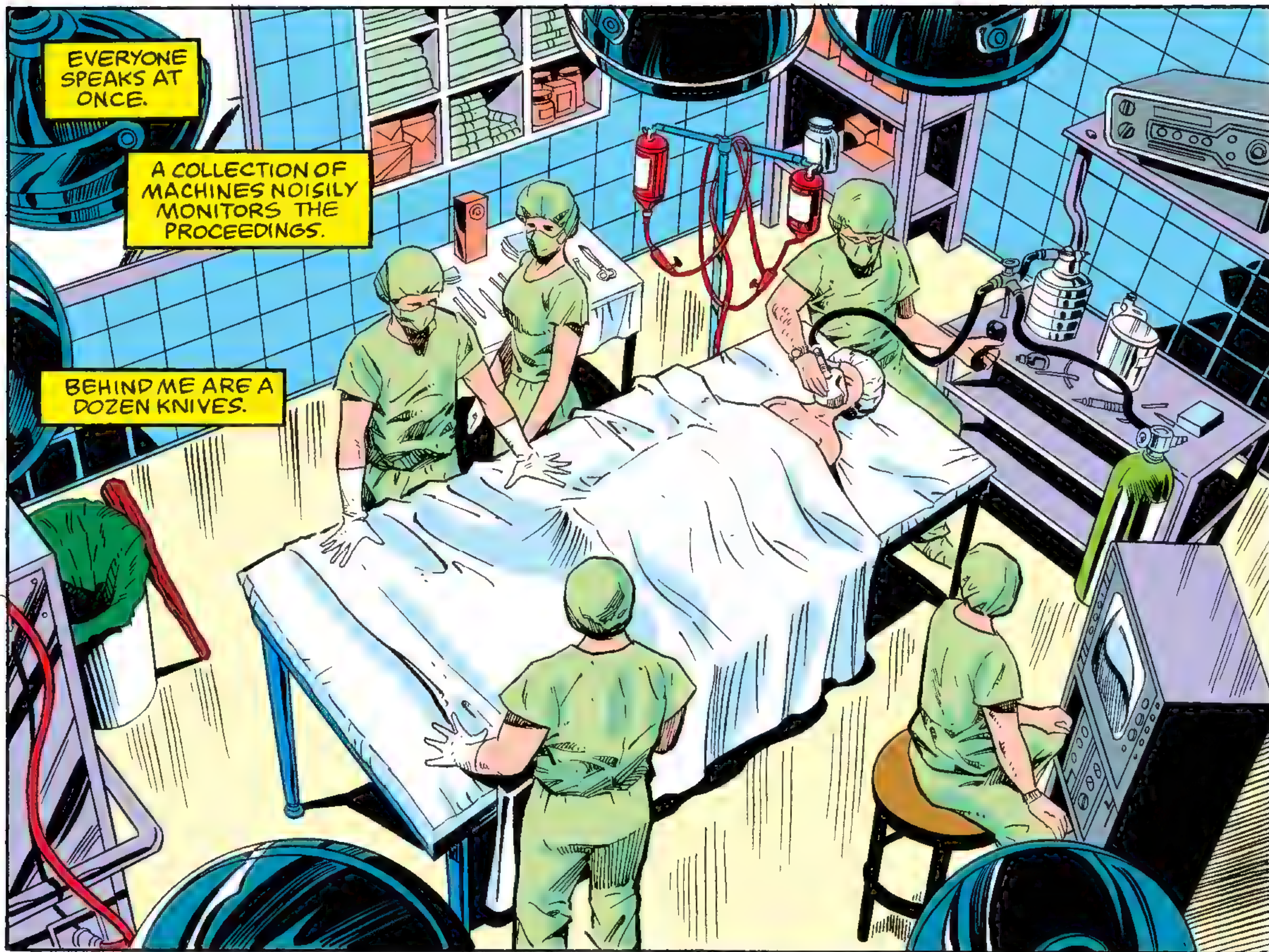












EVERYONE
SPEAKS AT
ONCE.

A COLLECTION OF
MACHINES NOISILY
MONITORS THE
PROCEEDINGS.

BEHIND ME ARE A
DOZEN KNIVES.



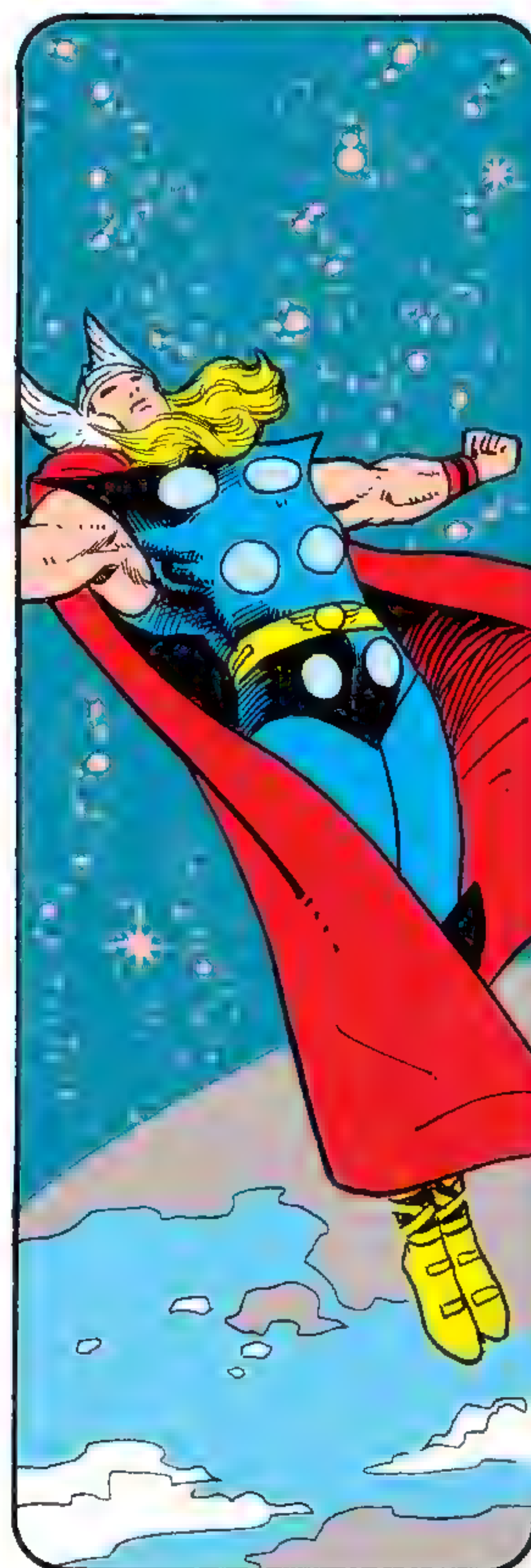
SHE IS
ONLY A
CHILD.

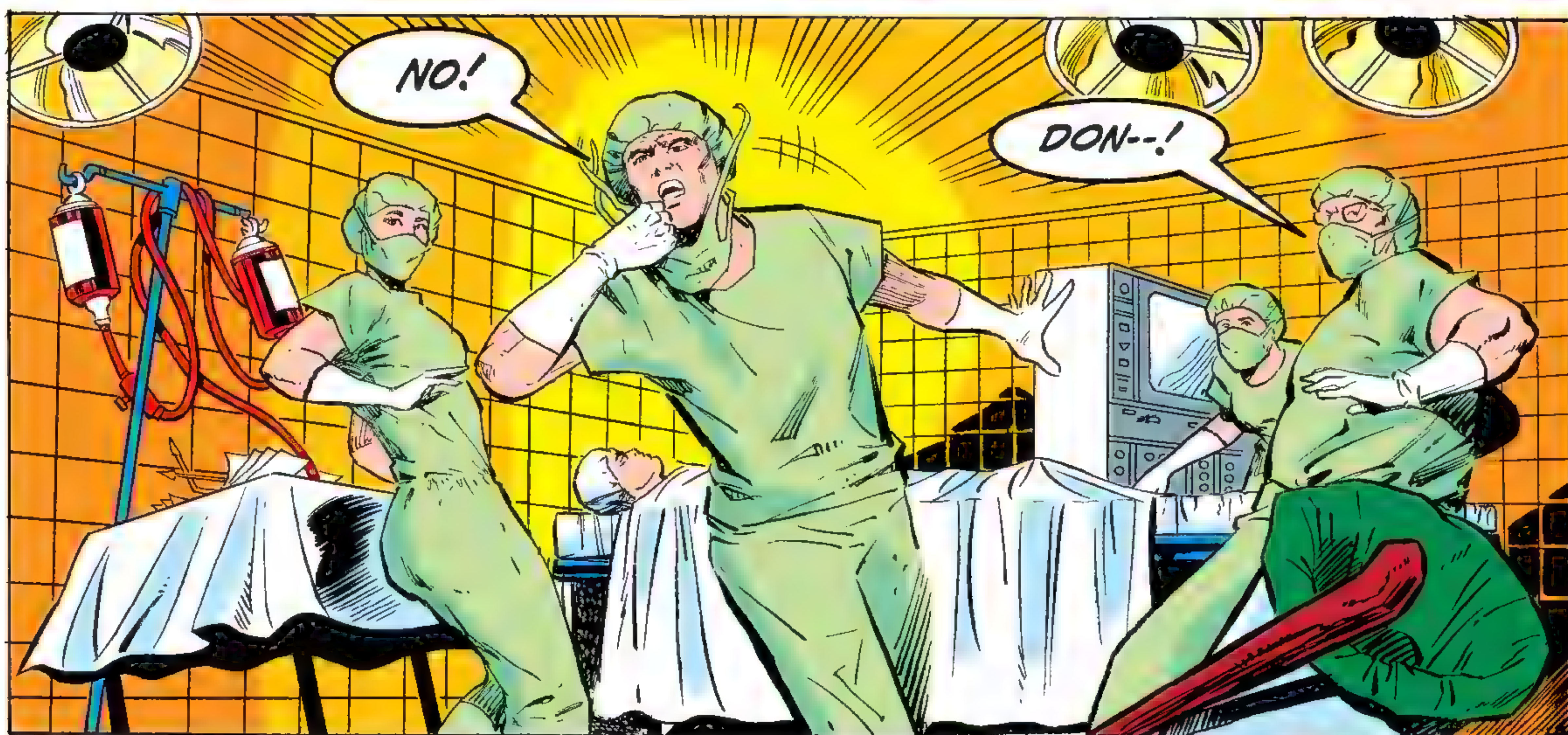
READY,
DOCTOR?



SO... FRAGILE. WHAT
IF I FAIL TO PRESERVE
THIS FLEETING LIFE SO
PRECIOUS? FAIL
AGAIN...

DOCTOR?!







I HAVE DESTROYED MYSELF.

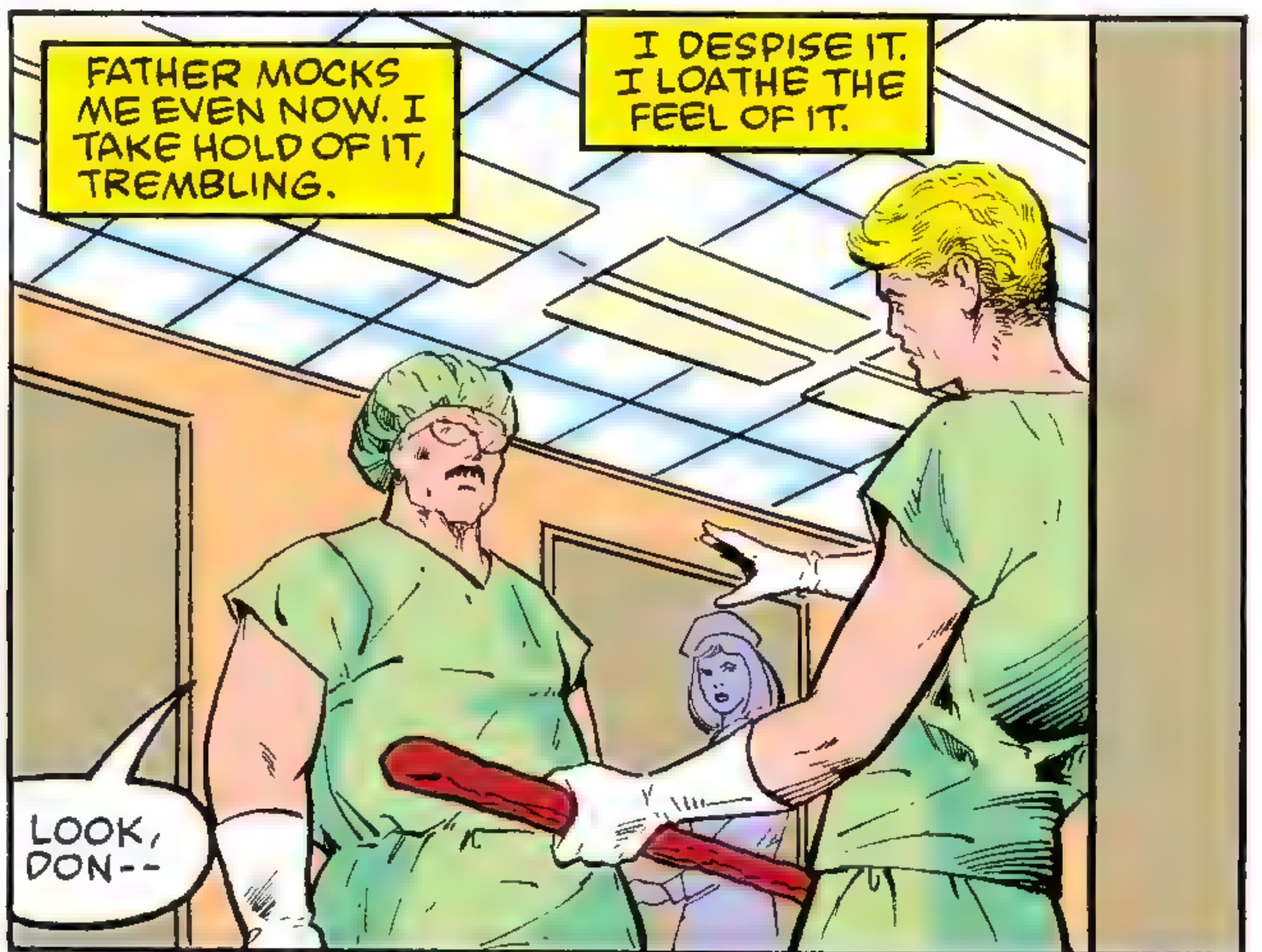


BLACKNESS CONSUMES ME.



THERE IS NO ESCAPE.

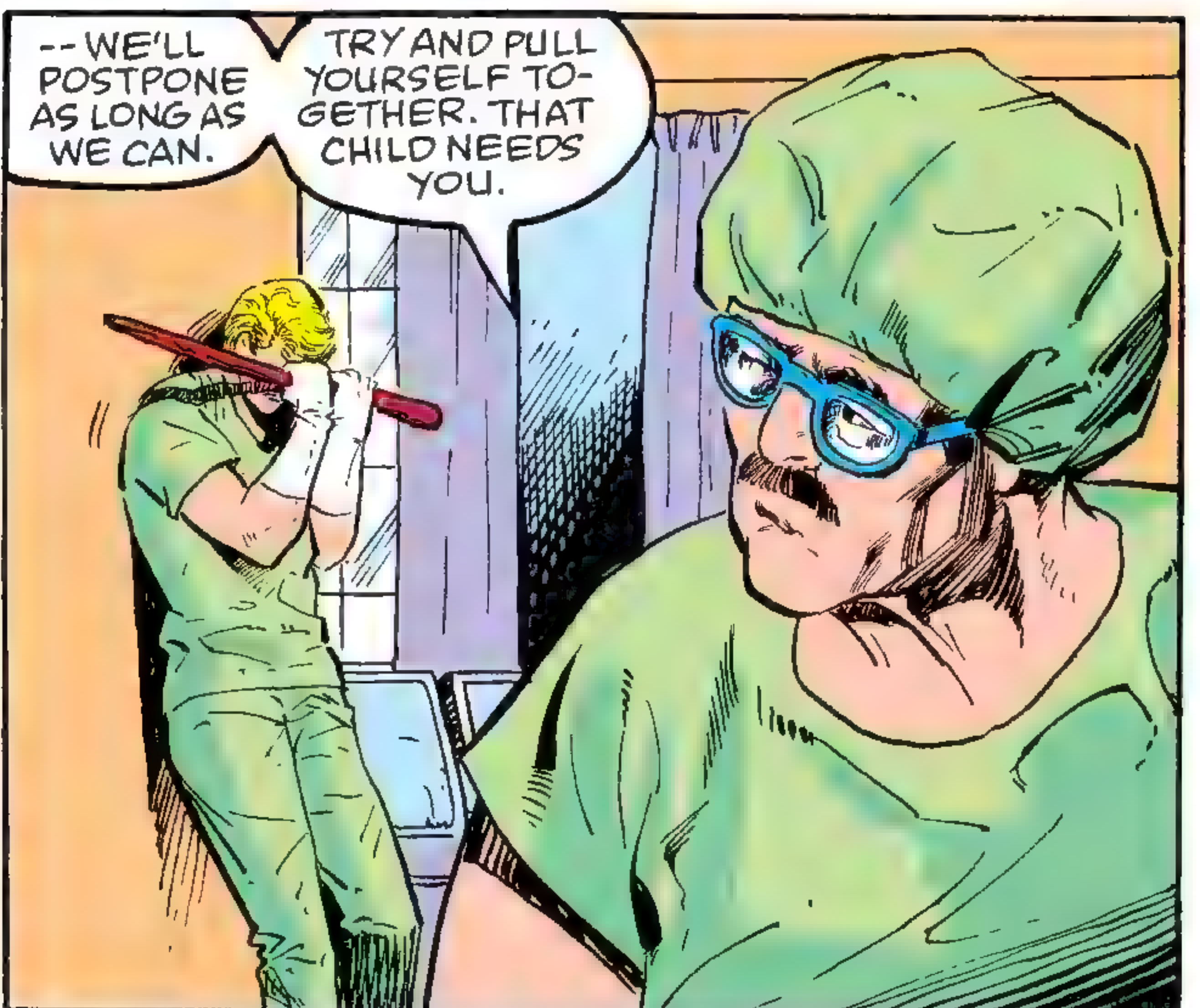
DON, YOU LEFT THIS IN THE O.R.



FATHER MOCKS ME EVEN NOW. I TAKE HOLD OF IT, TREMBLING.

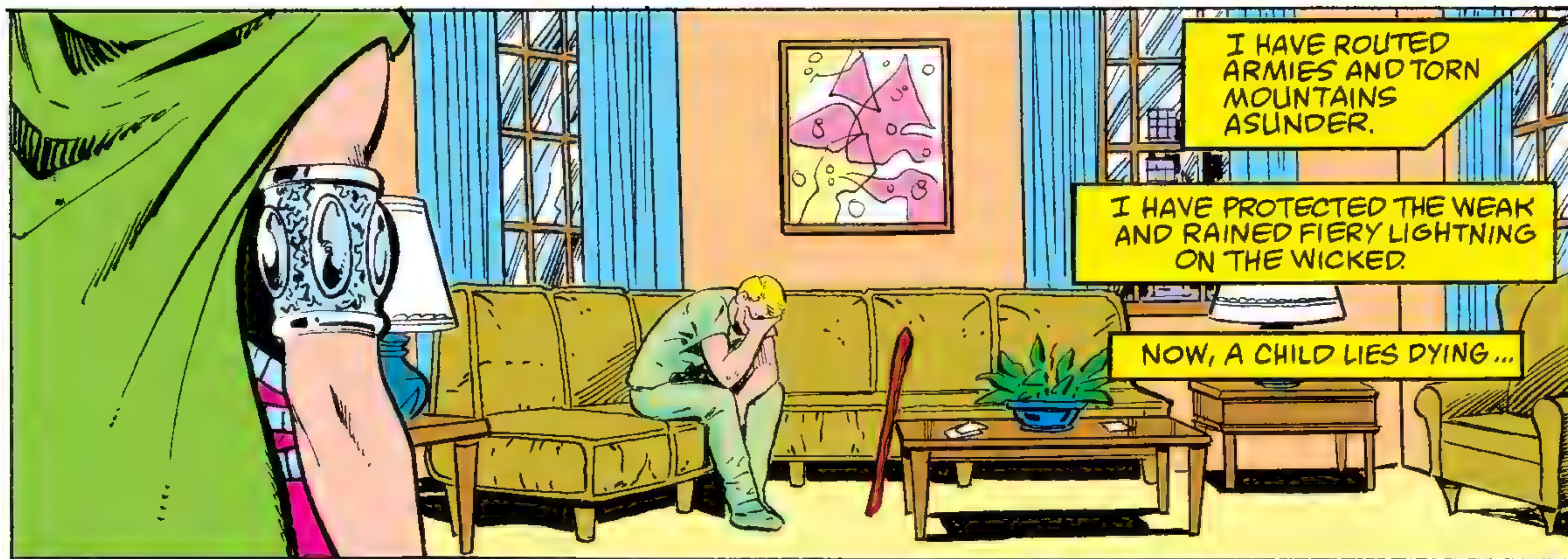
I DESPISE IT. I LOATHE THE FEEL OF IT.

LOOK, DON--



-- WE'LL POSTPONE AS LONG AS WE CAN.

TRY AND PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER. THAT CHILD NEEDS YOU.



I HAVE ROUTED
ARMIES AND TORN
MOUNTAINS
ASUNDER.

I HAVE PROTECTED THE WEAK
AND RAINED FIERY LIGHTNING
ON THE WICKED.

NOW, A CHILD LIES DYING ...



PERHAPS
THIS IS WHY
I LOVE
THEE.



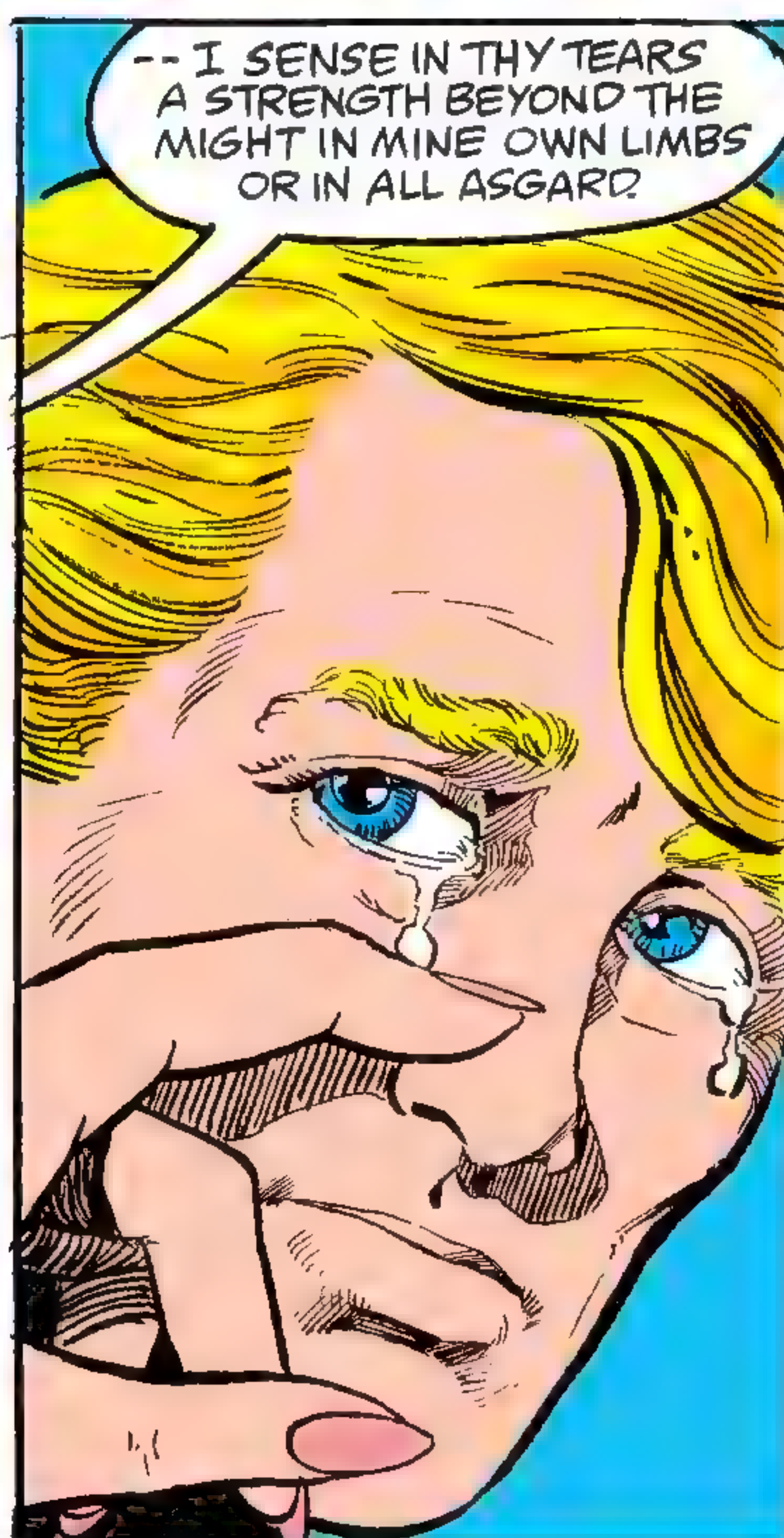
THAT THOU, ALONE AMONG
GODS, WOULDST SHED A TEAR
FOR THE LIFE OF.. A MORTAL
CHILD...

...A FLICKERING
UPON THE FACE
OF ETERNITY.

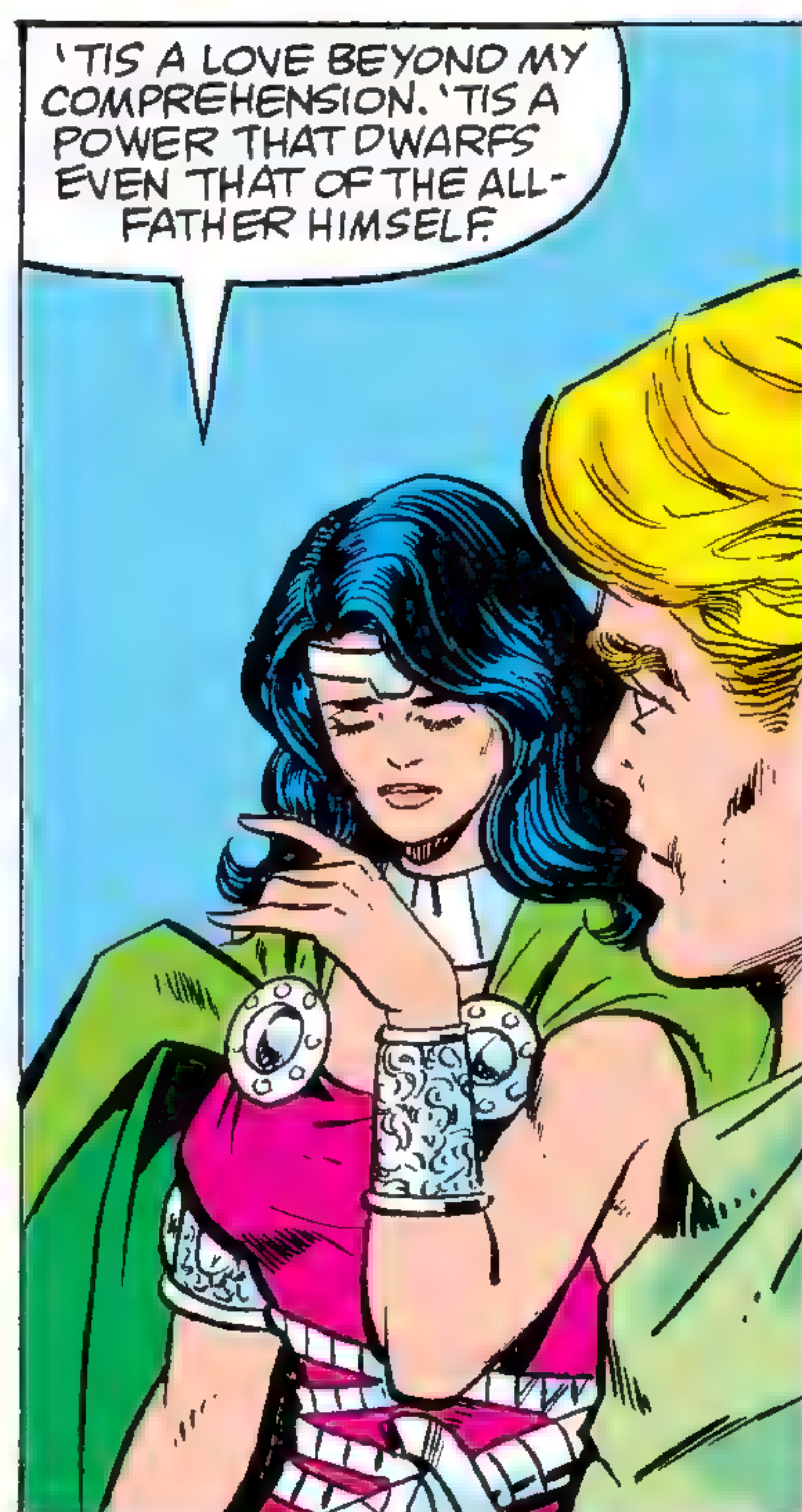


THERE IS A GREAT
MYSTERY HERE, MY
LOVE. ONE WHICH
I FEAR I SHALL
NEVER FULLY
SOLVE.

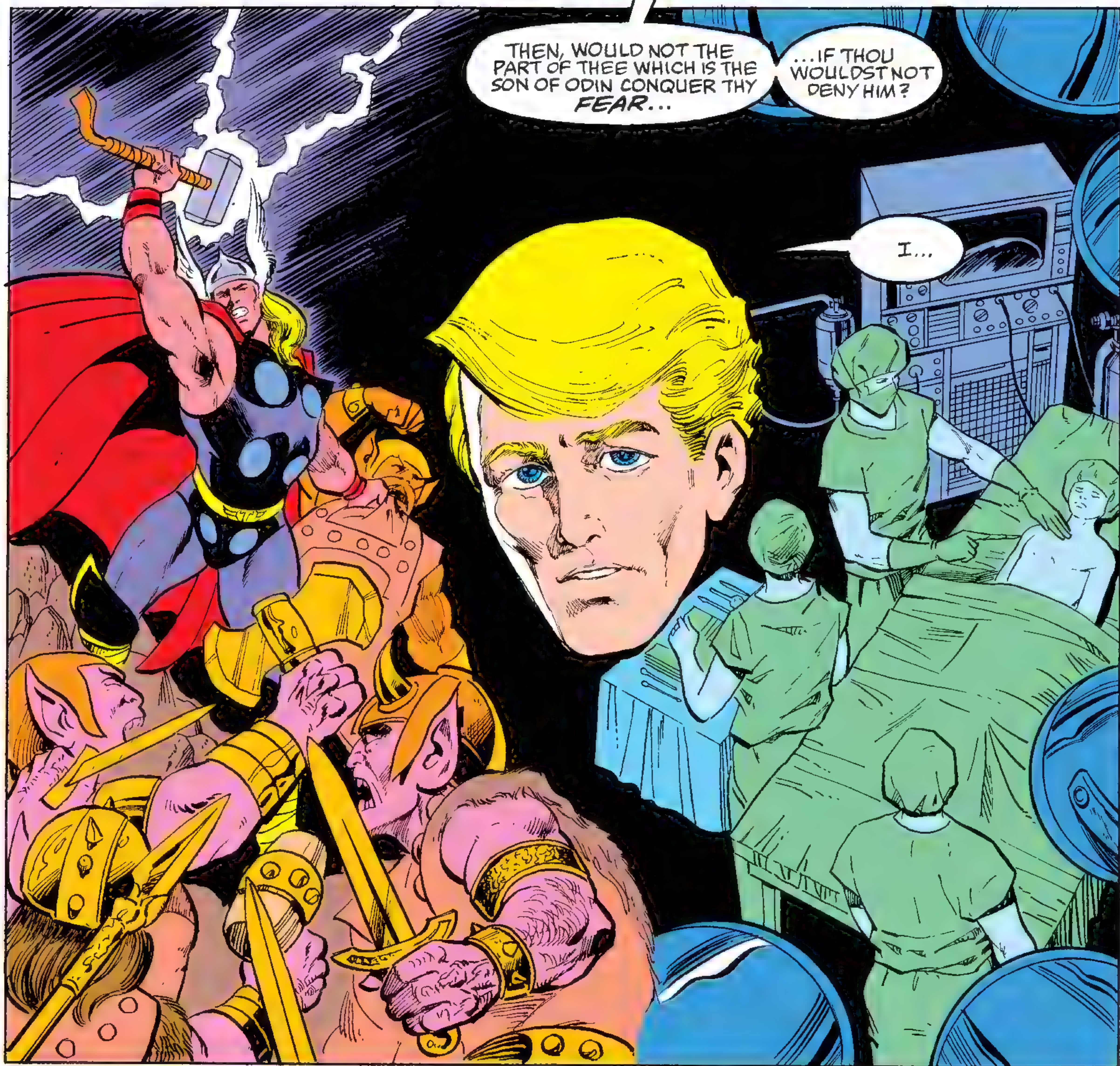
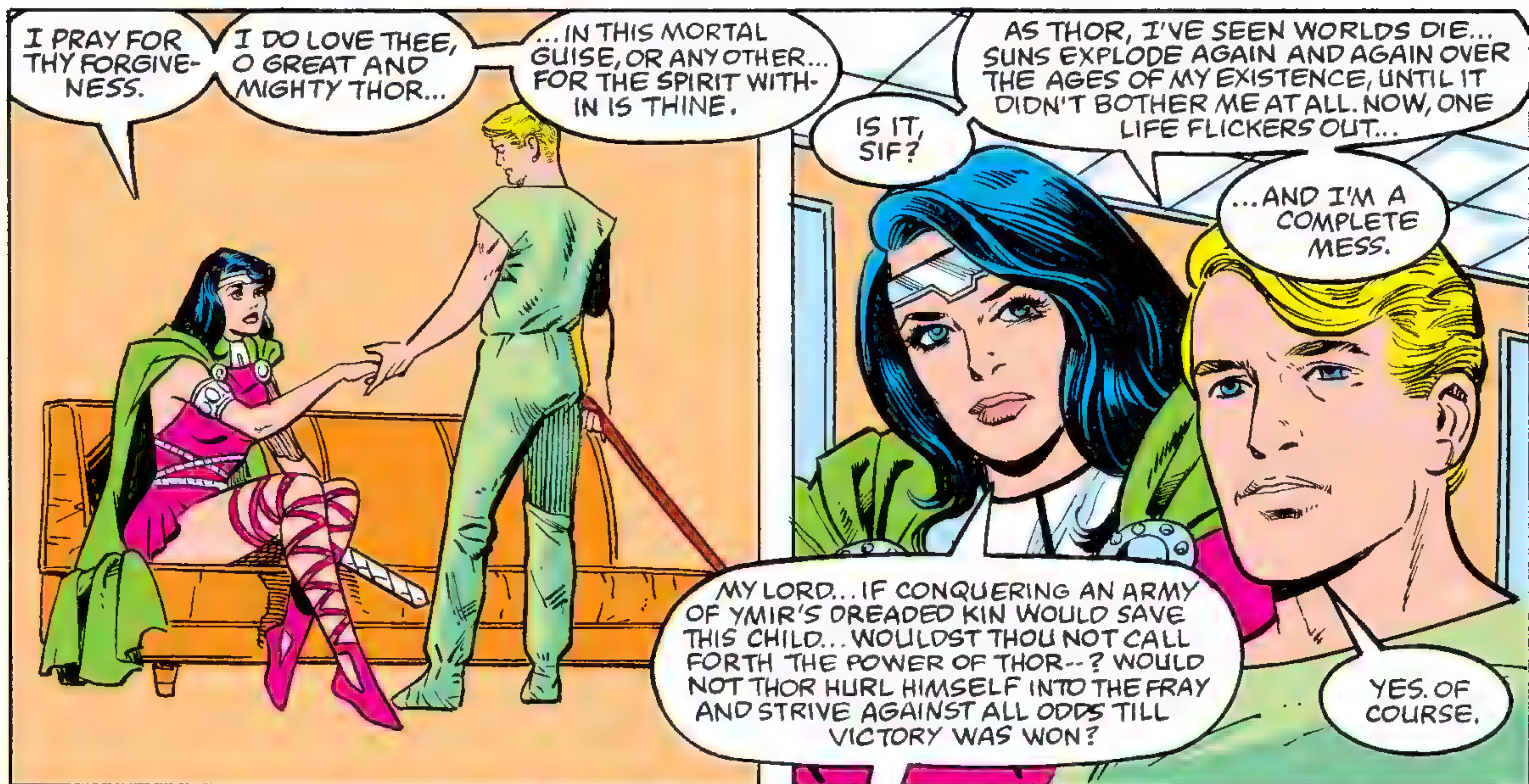
OF
HUMANNESS.
AND
MORTALITY,
I KNOW
LITTLE.
NEVER-
THELESS--

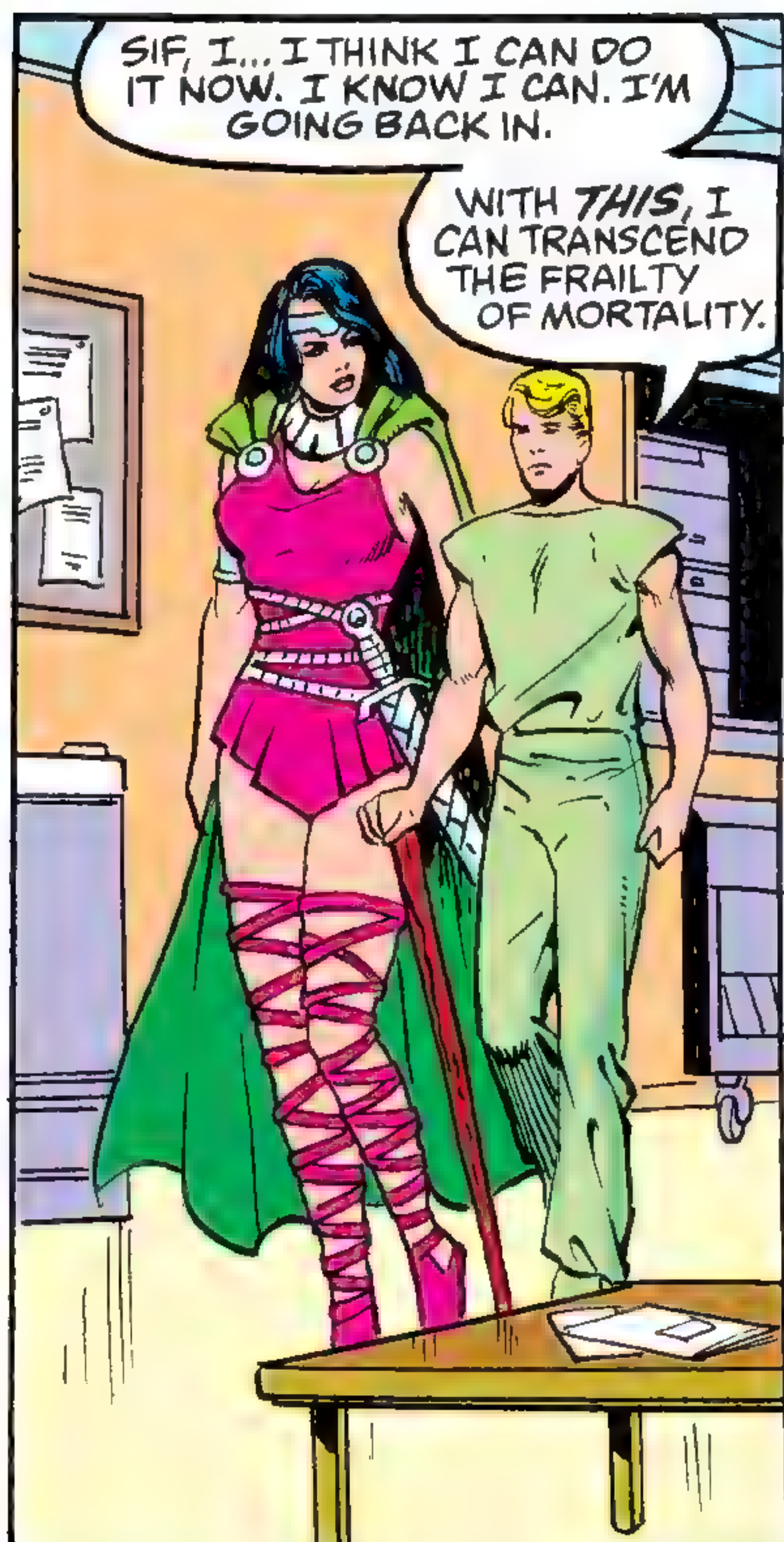


-- I SENSE IN THY TEARS
A STRENGTH BEYOND THE
MIGHT IN MINE OWN LIMBS
OR IN ALL ASGARD?



'TIS A LOVE BEYOND MY
COMPREHENSION. 'TIS A
POWER THAT DWARFS
EVEN THAT OF THE ALL-
FATHER HIMSELF.





SIF, I... I THINK I CAN DO IT NOW. I KNOW I CAN. I'M GOING BACK IN.

WITH *THIS*, I CAN TRANSCEND THE FRAILTY OF MORTALITY.



A CHILD'S LIFE DEPENDS ON ME. WITH *THIS*, WITH WHAT IT REPRESENTS, I CAN PERFORM THE OPERATION.

WITH THIS, I CAN FACE DEATH, BE IT ON A FIELD OF BATTLE OR IN AN OPERATING ROOM...

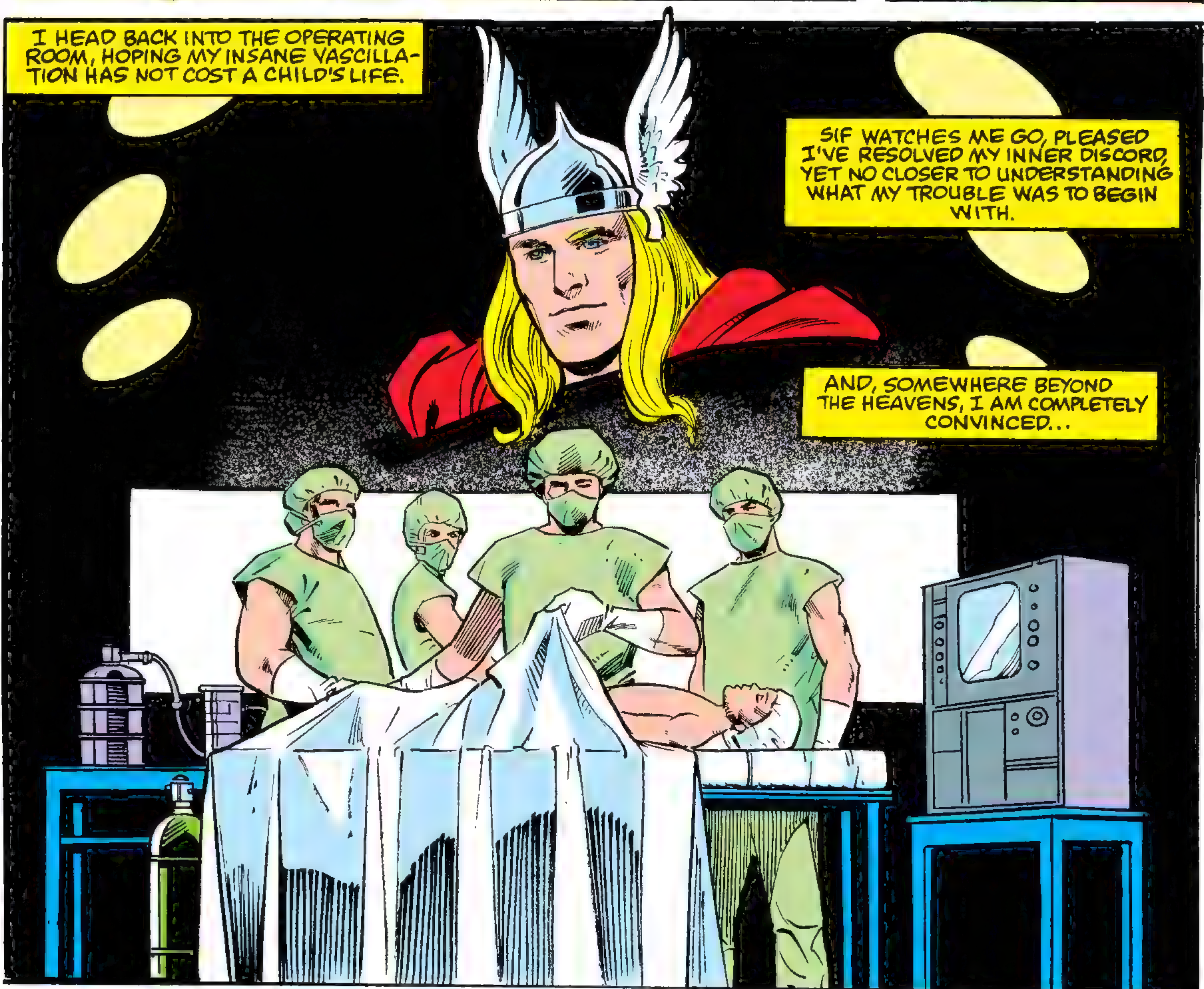


...WITH THE COURAGE TO ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES OF POSSIBLE FAILURE.

WITH *THIS*, I HAVE NO FEAR.

WITH THIS, I CAN FLY.

I HEAD BACK INTO THE OPERATING ROOM, HOPING MY INSANE VASCILLATION HAS NOT COST A CHILD'S LIFE.



SIF WATCHES ME GO, PLEASED I'VE RESOLVED MY INNER DISCORD, YET NO CLOSER TO UNDERSTANDING WHAT MY TROUBLE WAS TO BEGIN WITH.

AND, SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE HEAVENS, I AM COMPLETELY CONVINCED...

...MY FATHER HAS
FINALLY STOPPED
LAUGHING.

THE MOMENT OF CRISIS
HATH PAST. MY SON HATH
LEARNED THAT WHICH NEI-
THER MAN NOR IMMORTAL
COULD TEACH HIM.

HE HATH LEARNED THE WAY
IN WHICH HE SHALL WALK FOR
ALL ETERNITY. HE HATH STILLED
THE CONFLICT WITHIN HIS OWN
BREAST.

I CAN ONLY HOPE
THAT HIS NEW CONSIDER-
ATION WILL STAY DEATH'S
HAND FROM HIS MORTAL
FRAME.

I HOPE I HAVE
MANAGED TO KEEP
HIM ALIVE A BIT
LONGER.

HE SHALL NEVER AGAIN
STRIVE AGAINST HIS OWN IM-
MORTALITY. NAY, TO THE CON-
TRARY, HIS RESOLUTION SHALL
STRENGTHEN HIM ALL THE MORE.

ALAS, SOON HIS
STUBBORN HEART
SHALL RISE UP
AGAINST HE WHO
SIIRED HIM. YEA, I
HAVE FORSEEN IT.

⇒SIGH⇒

NOW'S THE
TIME, THEN, TO
PLAN *NEW* MISCHIEF
AGAINST THE SCION
OF ODIN. AFTER
ALL...

...HE HATH
MANY LESSONS
YET TO LEARN...

...HEH...HEH...
...HEH...



Head writer/editor Mark Gruenwald details the world of the Mighty Thor in these entries from *The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe* (1983-84).

THOR

Real Name: Thor

Occupation: Warrior-god

Identity: Publicly known, although the general public of Earth does not believe him to be the god that was worshipped by the Vikings.

Legal status: Prince of Asgard, honorary citizen of the United States

Other current aliases: Son of Odin, God of Thunder, Donald Blake

Former aliases: Siegmund, Siegfried

Place of birth: Somewhere in Norway, Earth

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: Odin (father), Jord (mother), Loki (step-brother), Frigga (foster mother)

Group affiliation: Avengers, Gods of Asgard

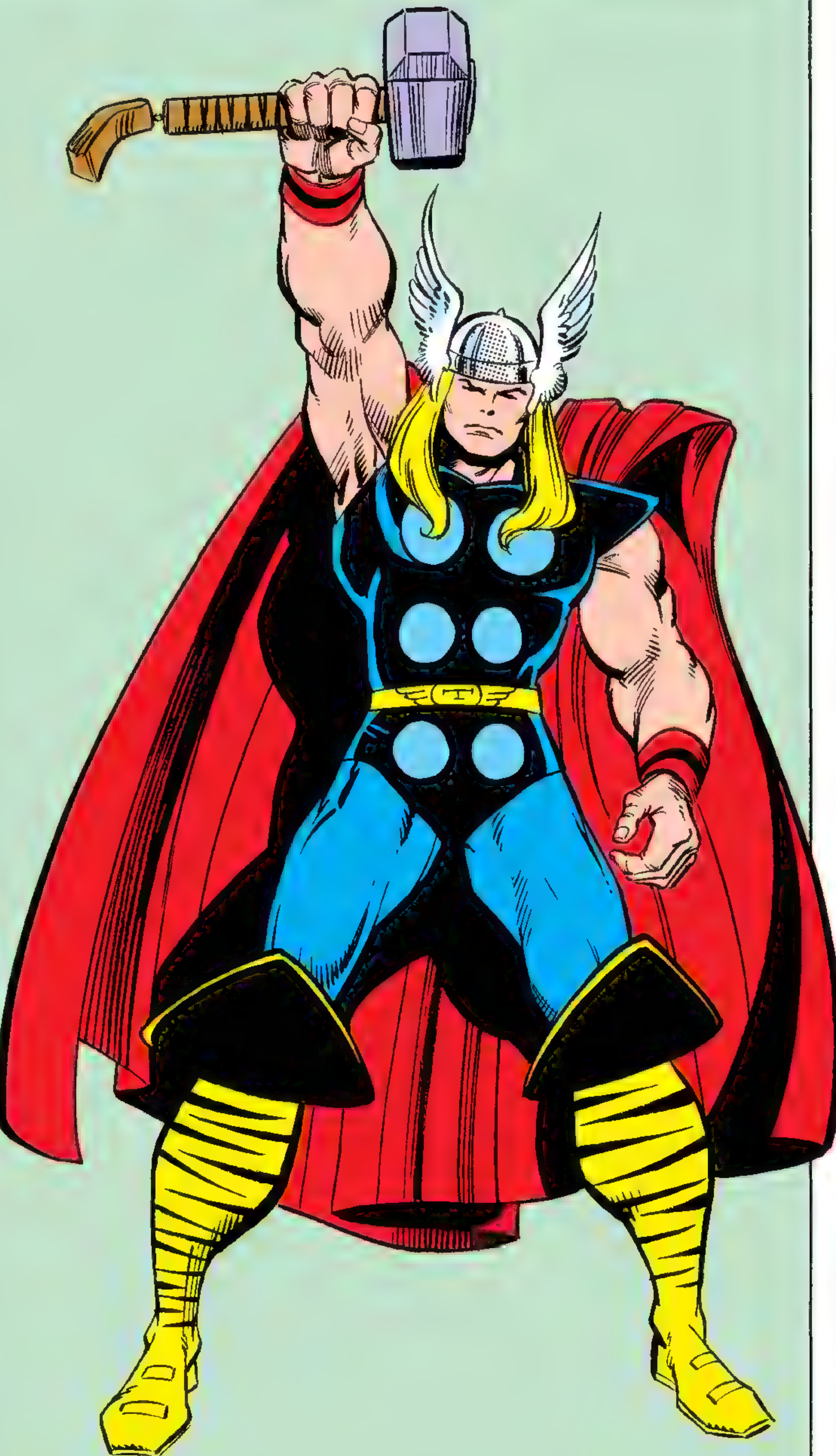
Base of operations: Asgard and Earth

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #83

Origin: Thor is the bloodson of Odin, lord of the gods of Asgard, and Jord, one of the guises of Gaea, the elder goddess of the Earth. As a product of the union of the might of Asgard and Earth, his power surpasses that of his fellow Asgardians. When he was 12, his father sent him to the land of the dwarves to bid them to create three gifts. One of these was the hammer Mjolnir, a weapon that Odin enchanted so that none but the worthy could wield it. For years, Thor strove to become strong and worthy enough to wield it. Winning the right to wield the hammer when he was 16, Thor practiced using it until he became the foremost warrior of Asgard. Somewhere in the 9th Century A.D. Thor journeyed to Earth for the first time and promoted his worship among the Vikings. He actively encouraged their adulation for about a century until he took note of the atrocities some of his more zealous followers were committing in his name. Ashamed, he withdrew from Earthly activities altogether, allowing the Norse religion to die out. He did not return to Earth until Odin sent him there in mortal guise for the first time as the Germanic heroes Siegmund and Siegfried.

Following those short-lived episodes, he returned to Asgard and led an active, adventurous life in battle with Storm Giants and other native enemies of Asgard. By the 20th Century, Thor had gotten over the shame of the Vikings, and was once again a proud, headstrong warrior. Odin decided it was time Thor learned humility. Enchanting him with yet another mortal form, that of medical student Donald Blake, Odin sent Thor to Earth stripped of the memory of his true identity. After medical school, Blake opened a private practice in New York. When two years of attending to the sick had passed, Odin planted within Blake's mind the suggestion to take a vacation in Norway. In Norway, Blake stumbled into the cavern where Thor's hammer was left in the enchanted form of a wooden cane. (This cave was Thor's birthplace millennia earlier.) Trapped in the cavern, Blake struck the stick against the ground and was transformed back into his real form, Thor. It was not until a few years later that Odin revealed to him the false nature of his Blake identity and the reason for it.

Despite the fact that he had learned his lesson of humility, Thor decided to maintain his Blake identity and continue his medical practice. Part of his affinity for Earth was the subconscious realization that his maternal heritage was on this world. The other part was simply his love for humanity and his



need to experience those things that only mortals could know. Thor has since divided his time between Earth and Asgard, much to the chagrin of his father, who wishes his son to remain at his side.

Height: 6' 6"

Eyes: Blue

Powers: Thor possesses the superhuman physical attributes of an Asgardian ("god"), but as the son of Odin, lord of the Asgardians, and Jord, elder goddess of the Earth, his strength is superior to that of the vast majority of his race. Like all Asgardians, Thor is extremely long-lived (although not

Weight: 640 lbs

Hair: Blond

immortal like the Olympians), superhumanly strong (the average Asgardian male can lift about 30 tons; Thor can lift 95), is immune to all diseases, and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about 3 times as dense as similar human tissue, contributing to the Asgardians' superhuman strength and weight.) His Asgardian metabolism gives him far greater than human endurance at all physical activities. Trained in the arts of war, Thor is a highly skilled warrior, proficient in hand-to-hand combat, swordsmanship, and hammer throwing (see *Thor's Hammer*).

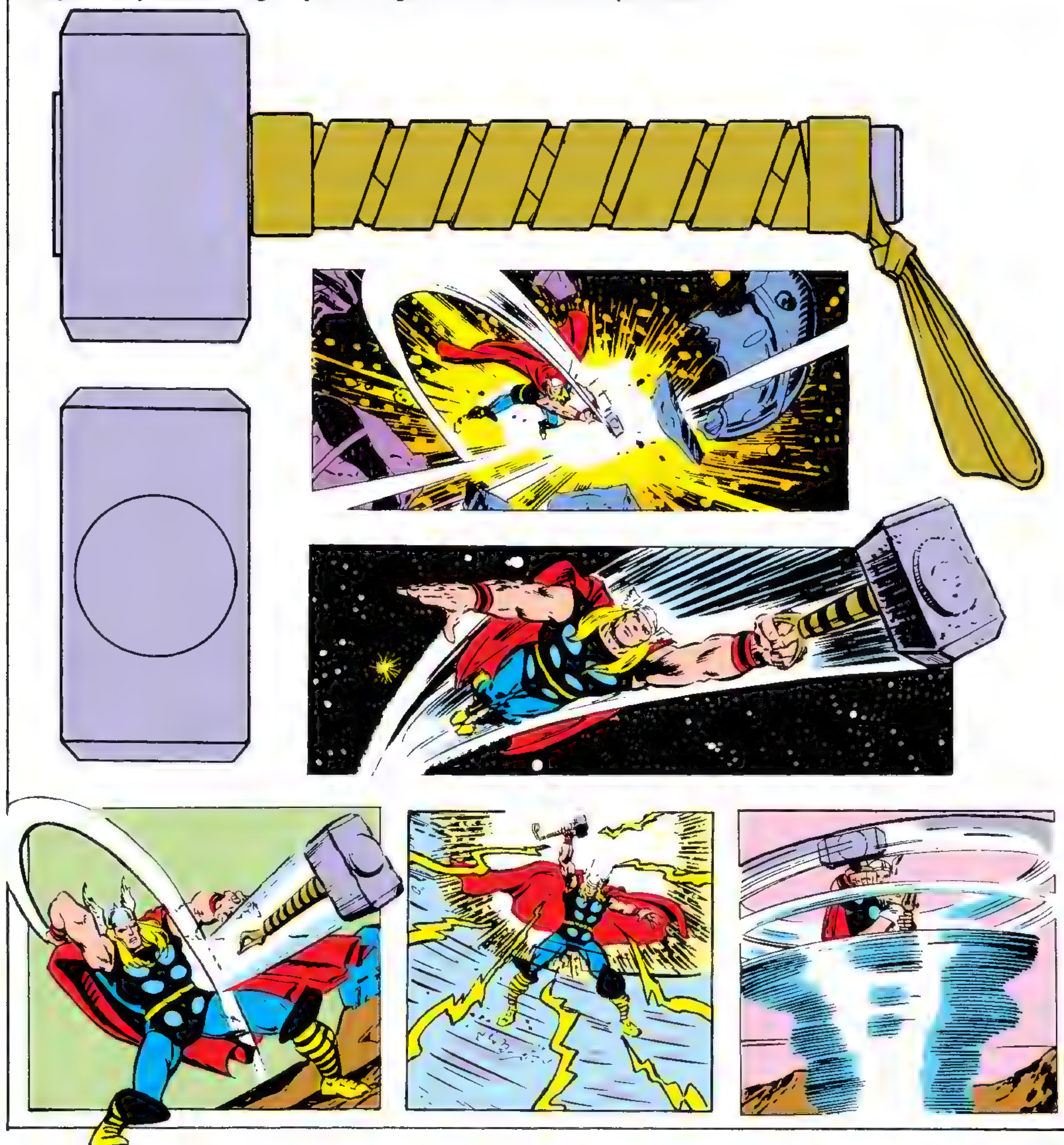
THOR'S HAMMER

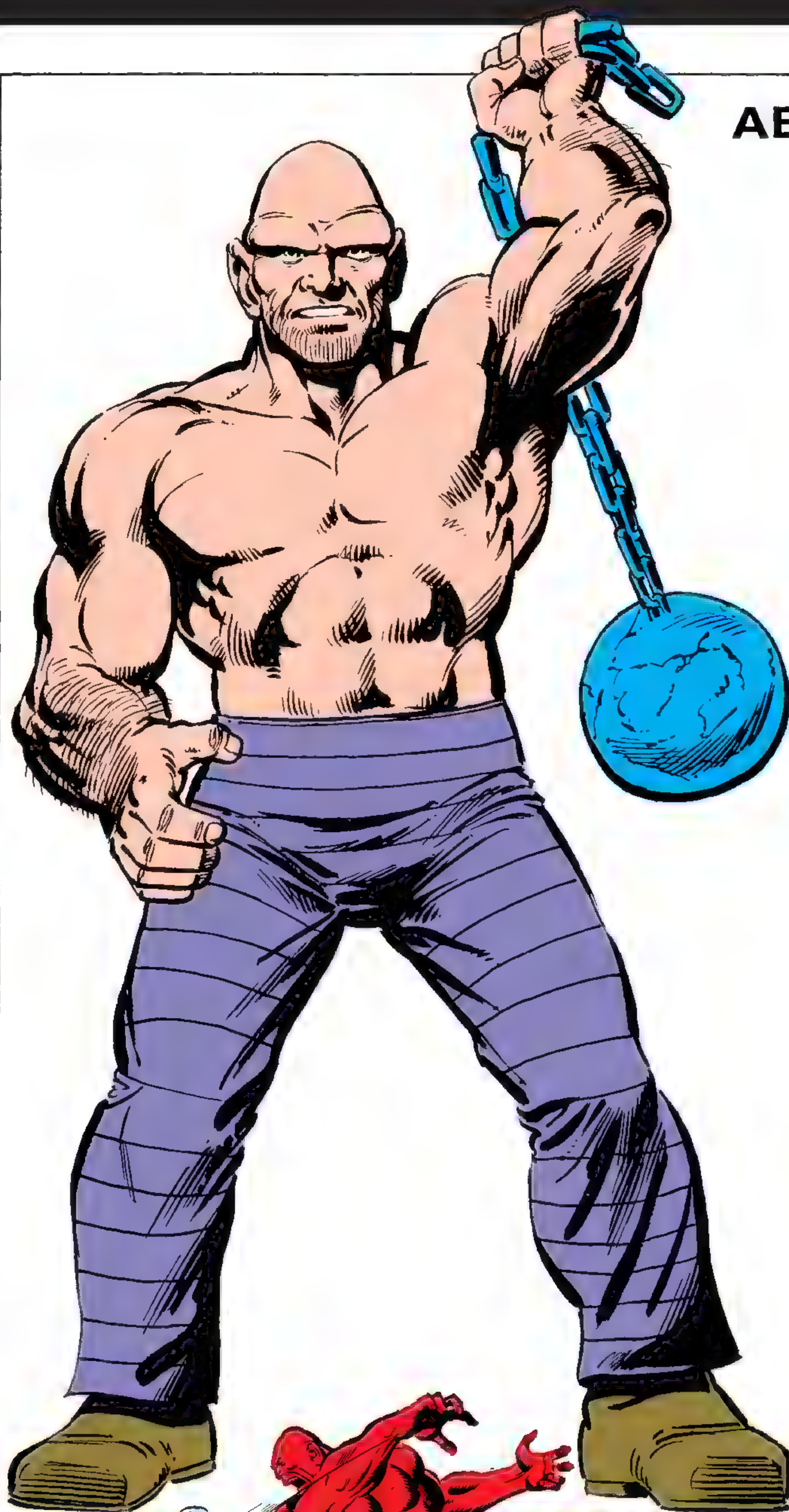
Thor wields the enchanted hammer named Mjolnir, one of the most formidable weapons known to man or god. Forged out of the mystical metal uru, whose chief properties are durability and ability to maintain enchantment, the hammer is 2 feet long and its handle is wrapped in leather which terminates in a thong. Besides being a nearly indestructible throwing weapon, the hammer has been given six enchantments by Odin to augment its physical qualities.

The *first* enchantment is that no living being can lift the hammer from the ground unless he or she is worthy. Provisions to that enchantment require that there can be but one worthy wielder of the hammer at a given time, and the current wielder must be bested in fair combat by a worthy contestant in order for that contestant to win it. The *second* enchantment causes the hammer to return to the exact spot from which it is thrown after striking its target. The *third* enchantment enables its wielder to summon the elements of storm (wind, rain, thunder, and lightning) by stamping its handle once on the ground. The *fourth* enchantment enables the hammer to open interdimensional portals, allowing its wielder to travel to other dimensions, such as from Earth to Asgard. (It is not known how Thor determines which dimension he wishes to travel to.) The *fifth* enchantment, given the hammer by Odin in recent times, enables Thor to transform into the guise of a mortal, physician Donald Blake, by stamping the hammer's head to the ground twice. A provision of this enchantment requires that the hammer can not be out of Thor's hand for more than one minute without his spontaneous reversion to his mortal self. When Thor transforms to Blake, his hammer takes the appearance of a gnarled wooden walking stick. So disguised, the hammer's enchantments limiting those who could lift it are not in effect.

The hammer has had one enchantment that has been rescinded. Formerly the hammer could be swung in such a way as to generate choral displacement inertia enabling its wielder to travel through time. This property, discrete from the hammer's dimension-spanning ability, was recently taken away by Immortus (see *Immortus*), whose mastery over time exceeds that of the gods themselves.

By throwing the hammer and grasping its leather thong, Thor can magically propel himself through the air in the semblance of flight. Just as the hammer can magically change its course in order to return to his hand when he threw it, so can it be influenced by its wielder to change its course while it was in his grasp. The precise manner in which Thor "steers" his hammer while in flight is not known, nor is the precise speed and distance Thor can attain with a single throw. Thor has been observed to be able to attain escape velocity from Earth's gravity with a single throw and to overtake space vessels.





ABSORBING MAN

Real Name: Carl Creel

Occupation: Professional criminal

Identity: Publicly known

Legal status: United States citizen with a criminal record

Other current aliases: Crusher

Place of birth: New York City

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: None

Base of operations: Mobile

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #114

Origin: While serving time in prison for aggravated assault committed while a member of an extortion racket, Creel was selected by Loki, the Asgardian god of mischief, as his unwitting agent in a scheme against Thor, god of thunder. By adding an enchanted potion composed of rare Asgardian herbs to Creel's drinking water in the prison commissary, Loki granted the brutal convict a bizarre power he hoped would enable him to defeat Thor.

Height: 6' 4"

Weight: 265 lbs

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Bald

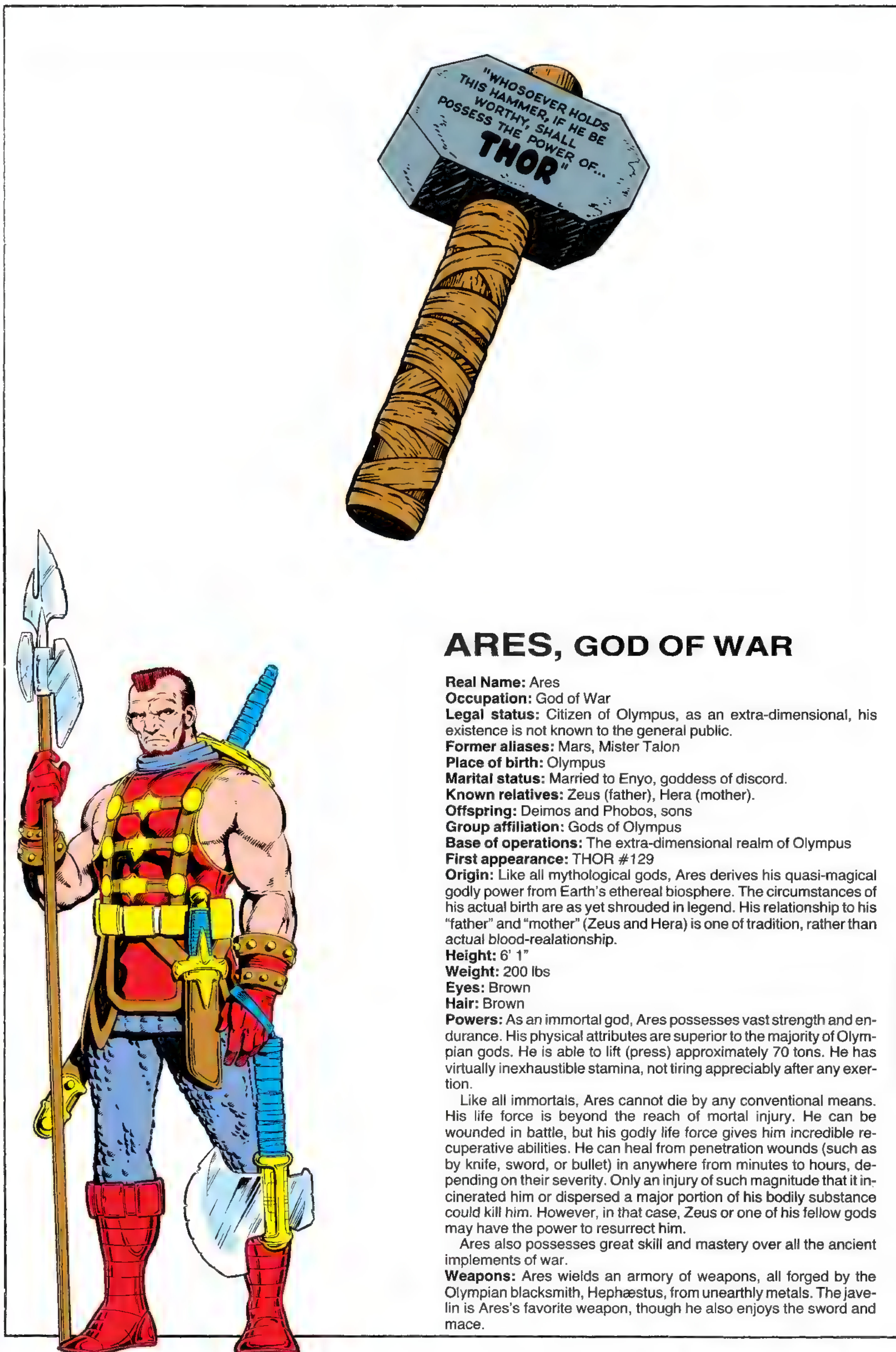
Powers: As the Absorbing Man, Creel possesses the ability to absorb at will the physical properties of anything he touches or that touches him. This power extends to both animate and inanimate objects and certain forms of energy. The matter of the Absorbing Man's body magically undergoes a material and physiological change so that his body actually becomes composed of the matter or energy with which he is making contact. While he is in this altered state, he still possesses his sentience despite the fact that his brain is now composed of the same material as the rest of him. Among the more ordinary materials he has been transformed into include steel, stone, wood and glass. More unusual have been his transformations into water, fire, snow and silk. His most powerful transformations have been into energy-states such as cosmic, nuclear, thermal or light.

The Absorbing Man has learned through practice to only absorb the properties of objects that he wishes to absorb. Originally he could be tricked into absorbing the properties of objects that would render him relatively vulnerable. There appears to be no time limit to how long he can retain a given property. When he is rendered unconscious or in a coma, he retains the form which he last consciously assumed. There would also appear not to be a minimum amount of time he must retain one form before assuming another. He can even become more than one substance at once.

The Absorbing Man can also absorb specific properties relating to the form or mass of an object he touches. For example he can assume the height of a skyscraper or the spikes of a mace. He can also assimilate mystic properties of objects or beings. He was both able to mimic the properties of Thor's hammer and the strength of Thor himself.

Weapons: The Absorbing Man's prison ball and chain, which he was wearing at the time of his original transformation, magically also possesses the same properties of transformation as his body, providing he is in contact with it.





ARES, GOD OF WAR

Real Name: Ares

Occupation: God of War

Legal status: Citizen of Olympus, as an extra-dimensional, his existence is not known to the general public.

Former aliases: Mars, Mister Talon

Place of birth: Olympus

Marital status: Married to Enyo, goddess of discord.

Known relatives: Zeus (father), Hera (mother).

Offspring: Deimos and Phobos, sons

Group affiliation: Gods of Olympus

Base of operations: The extra-dimensional realm of Olympus

First appearance: THOR #129

Origin: Like all mythological gods, Ares derives his quasi-magical godly power from Earth's ethereal biosphere. The circumstances of his actual birth are as yet shrouded in legend. His relationship to his "father" and "mother" (Zeus and Hera) is one of tradition, rather than actual blood-relationship.

Height: 6' 1"

Weight: 200 lbs

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Brown

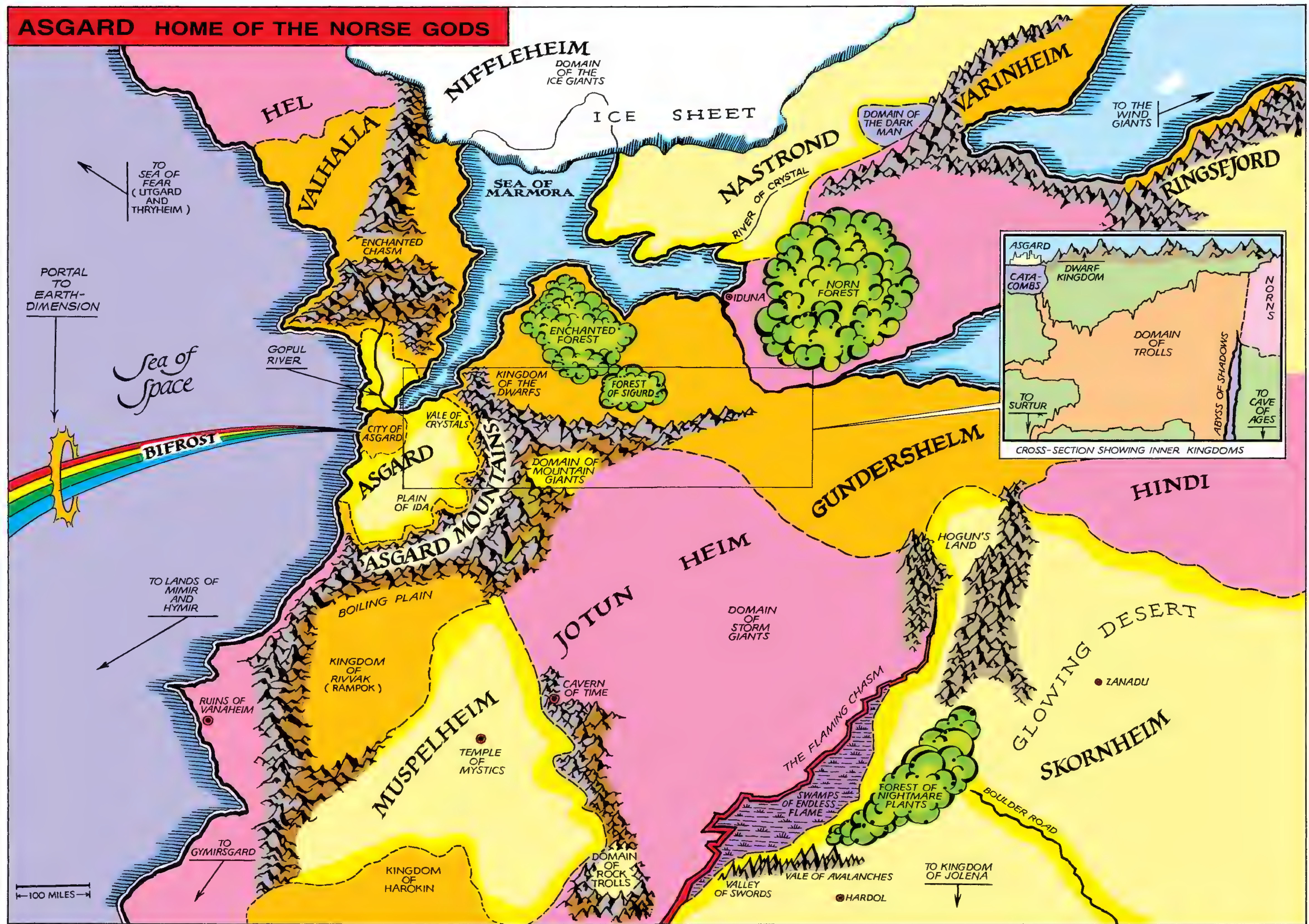
Powers: As an immortal god, Ares possesses vast strength and endurance. His physical attributes are superior to the majority of Olympian gods. He is able to lift (press) approximately 70 tons. He has virtually inexhaustible stamina, not tiring appreciably after any exertion.

Like all immortals, Ares cannot die by any conventional means. His life force is beyond the reach of mortal injury. He can be wounded in battle, but his godly life force gives him incredible recuperative abilities. He can heal from penetration wounds (such as by knife, sword, or bullet) in anywhere from minutes to hours, depending on their severity. Only an injury of such magnitude that it incinerated him or dispersed a major portion of his bodily substance could kill him. However, in that case, Zeus or one of his fellow gods may have the power to resurrect him.

Ares also possesses great skill and mastery over all the ancient implements of war.

Weapons: Ares wields an armory of weapons, all forged by the Olympian blacksmith, Hephaestus, from unearthly metals. The javelin is Ares's favorite weapon, though he also enjoys the sword and mace.

ASGARD HOME OF THE NORSE GODS

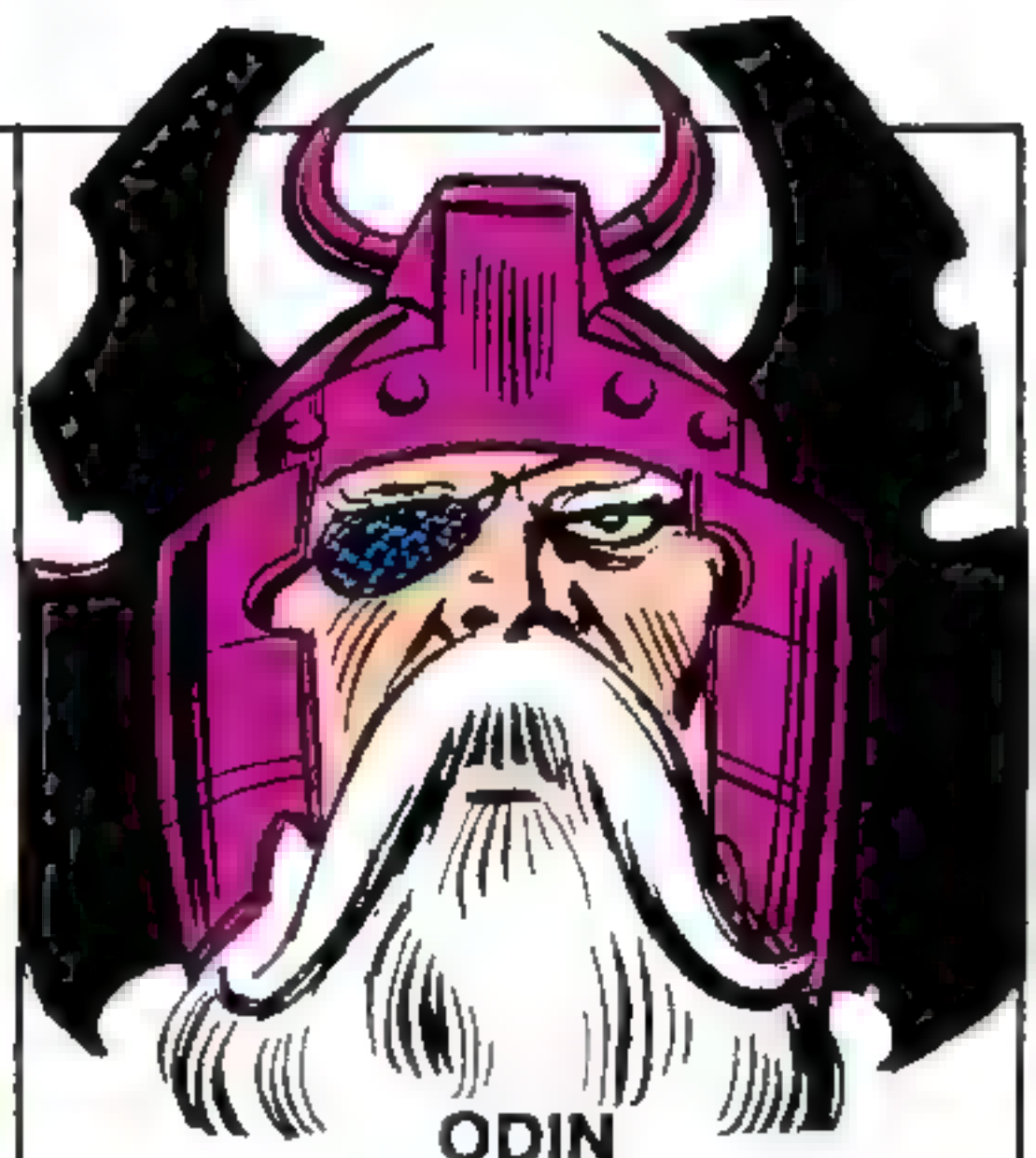


ASGARDIANS

The gods of Asgard are a race of powerful human-like entities of god-like powers, whose origins are lost in legend. Once worshipped by the Norsemen of Scandinavia, the Asgardians no longer have or actively seek worshippers. The Asgardians dwell in the extradimensional realm called Asgard.



THOR
God of Thunder
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #83



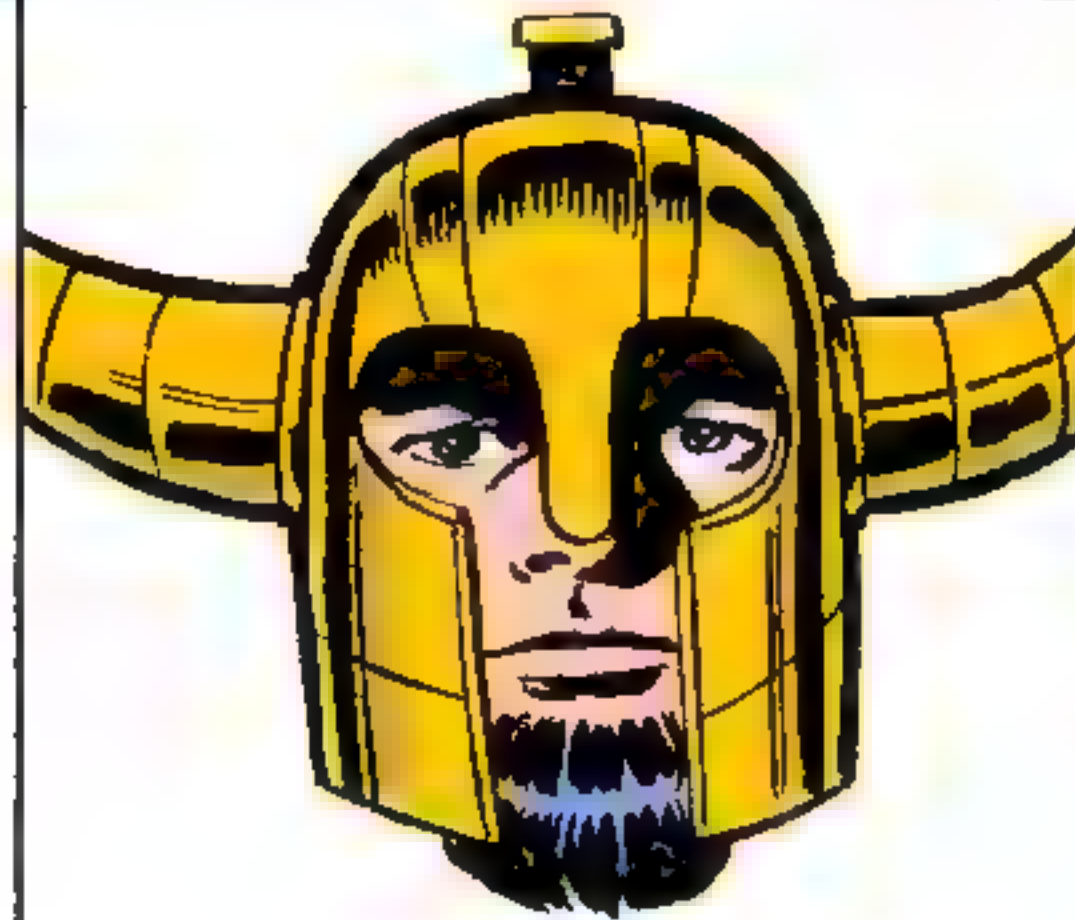
ODIN
All-Father of the Gods
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85



LOKI
God of Mischief
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85



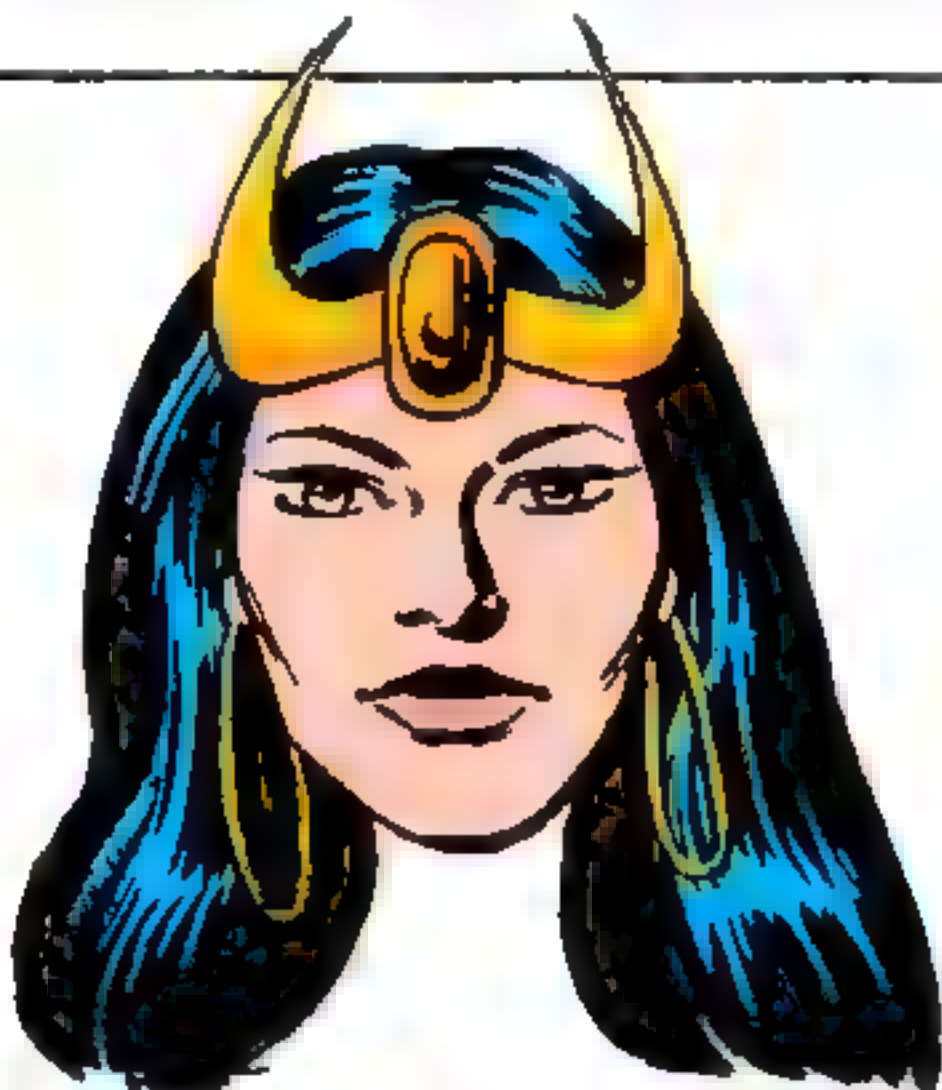
BALDER
God of Light
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85



HEIMDALL
Guardian of the Rainbow Bridge
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85



SIF
Goddess of the Hunt
First Appeared in THOR #136



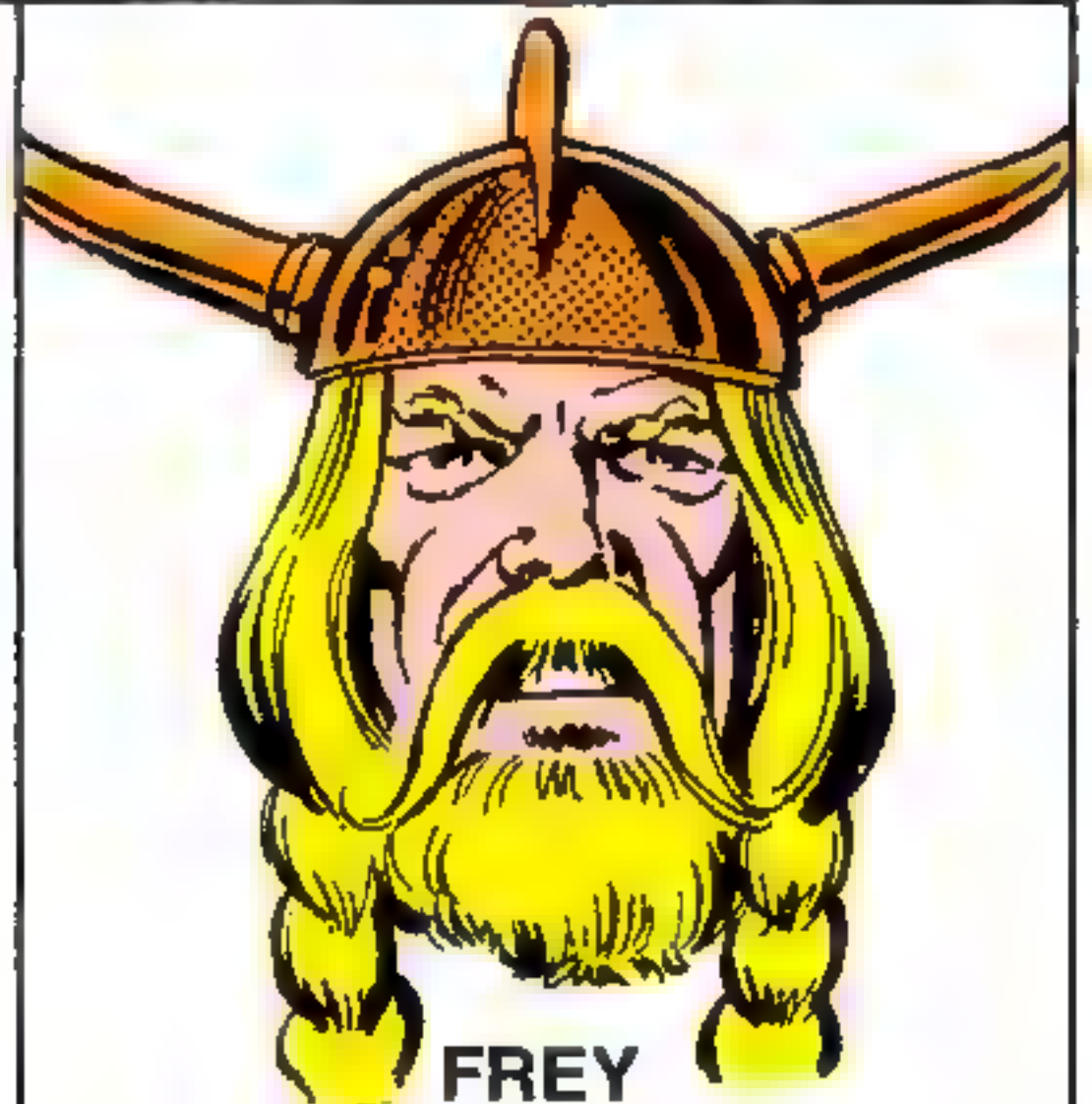
FRIGGA
Goddess of Marriage
First Appeared in THOR #274



SIGYN
Goddess of Fidelity
First Appeared in THOR #274



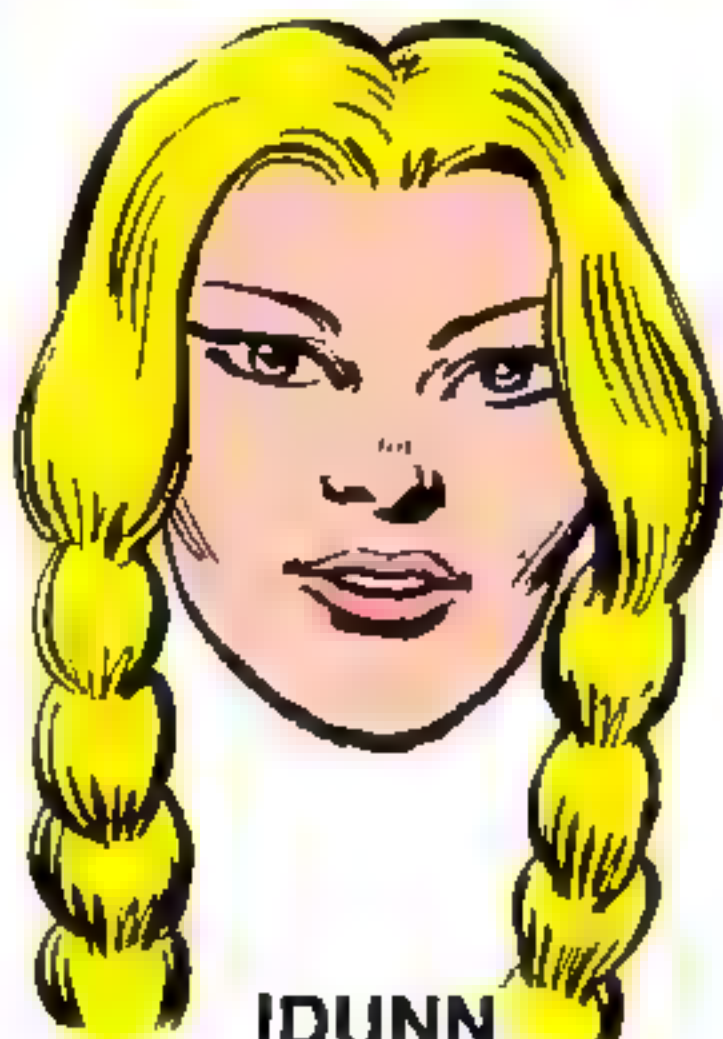
TYR
God of War
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85



FREY
God of the Harvest
First Appeared in THOR #294



HERMOD
God of Speed
First Appeared in THOR #275



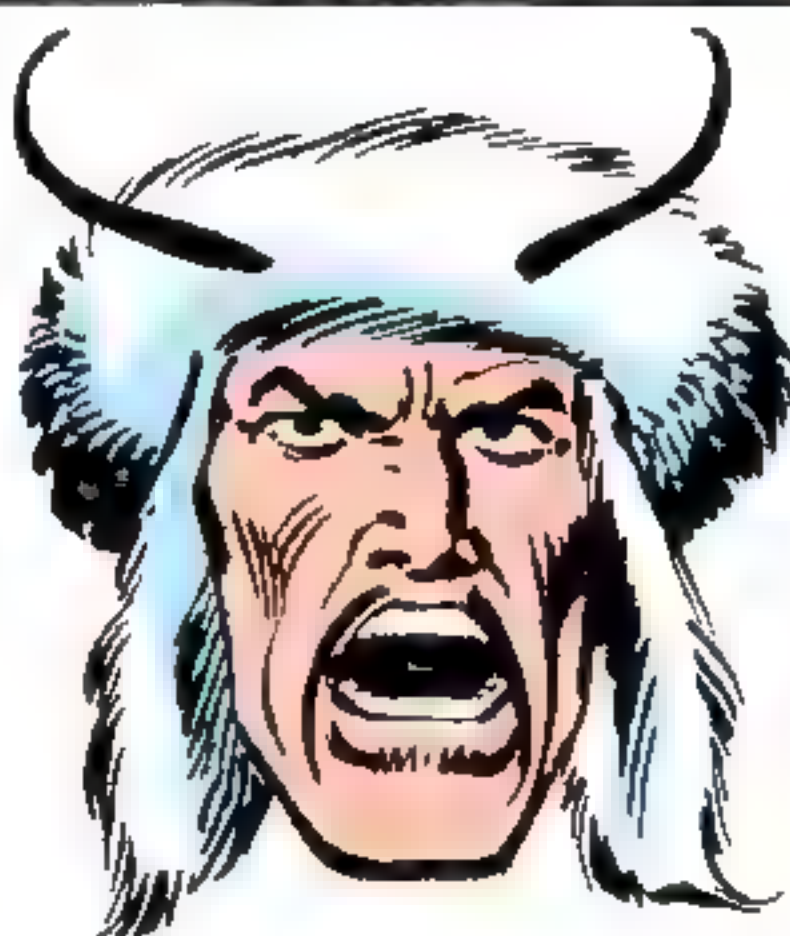
IDUNN
Goddess of Immortality
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #114



VOLLA
Goddess of Prophecy
First Appeared in THOR #127



HELA
Goddess of Death
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #102



HOGUN
Master of the Mace
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #119



FANDRAL
Lord of the Sword
First appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #119



VOLSTAGG
God of Girth
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #119



KARNILLA
Queen of the Norns
First Appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #107

COBRA

Real Name: Klaus Voorhees

Occupation: Former scientific research assistant, now professional criminal

Legal status: American citizen with a long criminal record

Identity: Secret

Place of birth: Rotterdam, Holland

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: The Cobra had a long-standing partnership with Mister Hyde but they are at present bitter enemies. He was also a member of the original Serpent Squad organized by the Viper.

Base of operations: New York area

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #98

Origin: Klaus Voorhees was an ex-convict working with the humanitarian medical researcher Professor Ezekiel Shecktor in India on a universal anti-toxin for snake venom. Jealous of his employer's success, Voorhees made one of the laboratory-kept cobras bite both Professor Shecktor and himself, hoping to make the professor's death look like an accident. Unknown to Voorhees, the cobra had been irradiated. The combination of radioactive cobra venom and the experimental anti-toxin created a mutagenic catalyst which caused Voorhees to acquire certain cobra-like powers.

Height: 5' 10"

Weight: 160 lbs

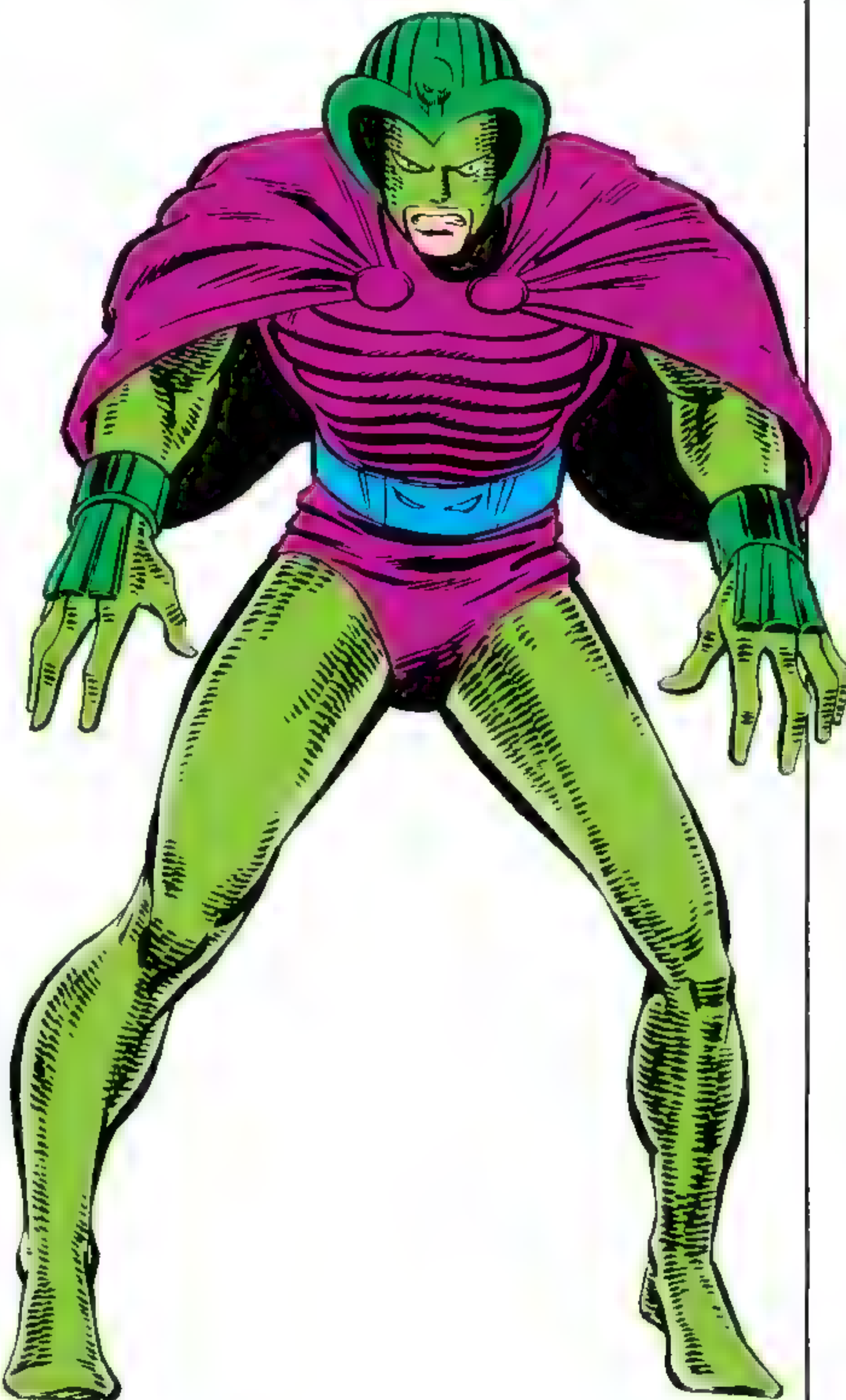
Eyes: Blue

Hair: Bald

Powers: The Cobra's major powers derive from the unusual nature of his mutagenically altered physiology. All of the bones in his body, including his skull, are malleable and his muscle tissue is exceedingly resilient, making his body very flexible and pliant. It is impossible for him to break a bone or tear a muscle. His flexibility enables him to slither into and out of very tight and small places. He can fit into any hole or slot down to four inches in diameter. The Cobra has an incredible degree of independent control over every muscle in his body, enabling him to slither across the ground without using his arms and legs simply by muscle contraction. He has superior human-level strength, capable of lifting (pressing) 500 pounds. He is extremely quick, capable of moving up to 50 miles per hour for several seconds. His agility and speed make him very difficult to catch or hold on to.

Weapons: The Cobra has developed a number of special weapons to enhance his cobra-like powers. His costume is specially treated with a silicon and graphite-dust compound, making it incredibly slippery. He has also designed special chemical suction devices for his fingers and feet, enabling him to stick to walls and ceilings. In the compartment behind his articulated chest armor is a fifty-foot long coil of steel cable that can be shot by means of a powerful spring.

From his spring-loaded wrist devices, the Cobra can shoot a number of deadly projectiles. His "cobra-bite" missiles contain snake-venom capable of killing an average-sized human being in six minutes. He has also used projectiles carrying smoke, nerve gas, and a special substance that induces temporary blindness.



EDITOR'S NOTE

For the past twelve months, the OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE has cataloged, described, and depicted virtually all of the major active living superhuman beings in the vast Marvel Universe. It was beyond the scope of the series as it was originally defined to treat the various entities who through death or disability were no longer active within the current time-frame (1982-1983). It was hard enough to fit even the *active* characters into a mere twelve volumes. Our foremost goal was to provide you with background information on people you were likely to encounter reading a current Marvel comic series.

We knew from the start that strict focus on the present would leave scores of Marvel superstars from years past unacknowledged. But, we figured, if there was demand for subsequent editions after the original twelve-issue series had run

its course, we could always add them later. Needless to say, Marveldom Assembled raised its collective voice and requested — no, demanded — entries on their favorite superstars of yesteryear, such dearly departed stalwarts as the original Captain Marvel, the original Nova, Ghost Rider, Adam Warlock, and Phoenix, to name but a few. And so, before we even reached OHOTMU #12, plans were afoot for a special addendum to the trend-setting series.

When we gathered the list of candidates for inclusion in the Book of the Dead and Disabled, we of course found that there were far too many to include in a single volume. So keep your eyes peeled for the fact-packed second issue of this addendum, on sale within the month.

And now, a brief word on the subject of Death . . .

DEATH IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE

Death is a fact of life in the Marvel Universe. Many of the persons described in the previous twelve volumes of the OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE have escaped seeming death in the past thanks to their superhuman powers or those of others, futuristic technology, or mystical forces. Except for those beings listed as "Inactive," the ones described in this volume and the next have *not* escaped Death's iron embrace.

What is death? Clinically speaking, it is the cessation of bodily functions for such a period of time that there is irreversible damage to living organic tissue. Mystically speaking, it is the permanent separation of a being's astral self from his or her physical self. This astral form has been described as a being's "spirit," "soul," "life force," "life essence" or "consciousness." (Certain adepts like Dr. Strange and Professor X are even able to project their astral selves from their physical selves without dying to do so.) What happens to the astral self or spirit of a being who dies has never been determined. Certain occult or cosmic entities have been able to trap select spirits at the exact moment of clinical death and even hold on to them for a time. Other entities have been able to mystically or cosmically preserve their own life essence in some way after the death of their physical bodies. The astral forms of the Asgardians, Olympians, Eternals, and other gods and immortals, are categorically harder than those of mortals. A god's life force possesses such intensity that it remains cohesive long after the death of the physical body. Some immortals such as the Eternal Chronos have existed eons without a physical body. But these are the exceptions. What happens to the overwhelming majority of souls liberated from the physical bonds of their body at death is still a vast mystery.

Further compounding the mystery of death is the fact that in the Marvel Universe the concept of Death can take a perceptible personified form. Death and the being called Eternity (see *Eternity*) together comprise the mystical essence of the universe: Eternity embodies the principle of life, and Death embodies the principle of mortality. All of the universe's creatures must eventually surrender to Death. Even the Eternals and Asgardians age, although they do so very slowly, and will someday die. The Olympian gods do not age, but can be killed by a sufficiently powerful force. Eventually Death may claim everything that lives and the entire universe may succumb to entropy.



Death and Eternity can manifest themselves as sentient beings, and have spoken of themselves as siblings. They have always appeared in humanoid form, although presumably they appear in alien form to aliens. Eternity generally appears in the form of a male, but it is probable that it could just as easily appear in female form. Death usually manifests itself in female form, as here, but this is because Death is usually seen in attempts to seduce males into doing its will. Presumably women might see Death in male form. When Death presented itself once to Dracula as a rival rather than as a seducer, it took male form. While Death can take the guise of a living human, it more often appears to living beings as a hooded, robed skeleton, as shown here.

The personification of Death sometimes seems to possess fathomable motives. Death seems to seek new conquests, and manipulates mortals with or without their knowledge in order to gain them. Death once attempted to destroy the vampire-lord Dracula through human pawns because Dracula was depriving it of conquests by creating vampires who were neither truly alive nor truly dead. Death failed on that occasion, but Dracula eventually fell victim to permanent destruction (see *Dracula*). Although Death ordinarily seems content to maintain a balance in the universe between its power and Eternity's, Death will seize opportunities that arise to achieve dominance over Eternity. Death once appeared to Thanos (see *Thanos*) in the form of a woman with whom he fell so much in love that he was willing to destroy the universe in order to please her. Death also apparently works in partnership with Galactus, the destroyer of worlds (see *Galactus*).

Death's ultimate goals are unknown. There may be a master plan guiding its movements or nothing more than random, inexorable chance. The relationship between Death and the so-called Death Gods of the various pantheons is also very hazy (see the essay on *Death Gods* in our next volume). Death Gods like Hela and certain demons like Mephisto seem to receive certain undefined powers from Death and even rule over extradimensional realms seemingly inhabited by the souls of deceased mortals. But whether they are Death's pawns or pretenders cannot be determined.

In short, Death, as both a state of being and as an abstract entity, remains the Great Inevitability as well as and the Great Mystery in the Marvel Universe.

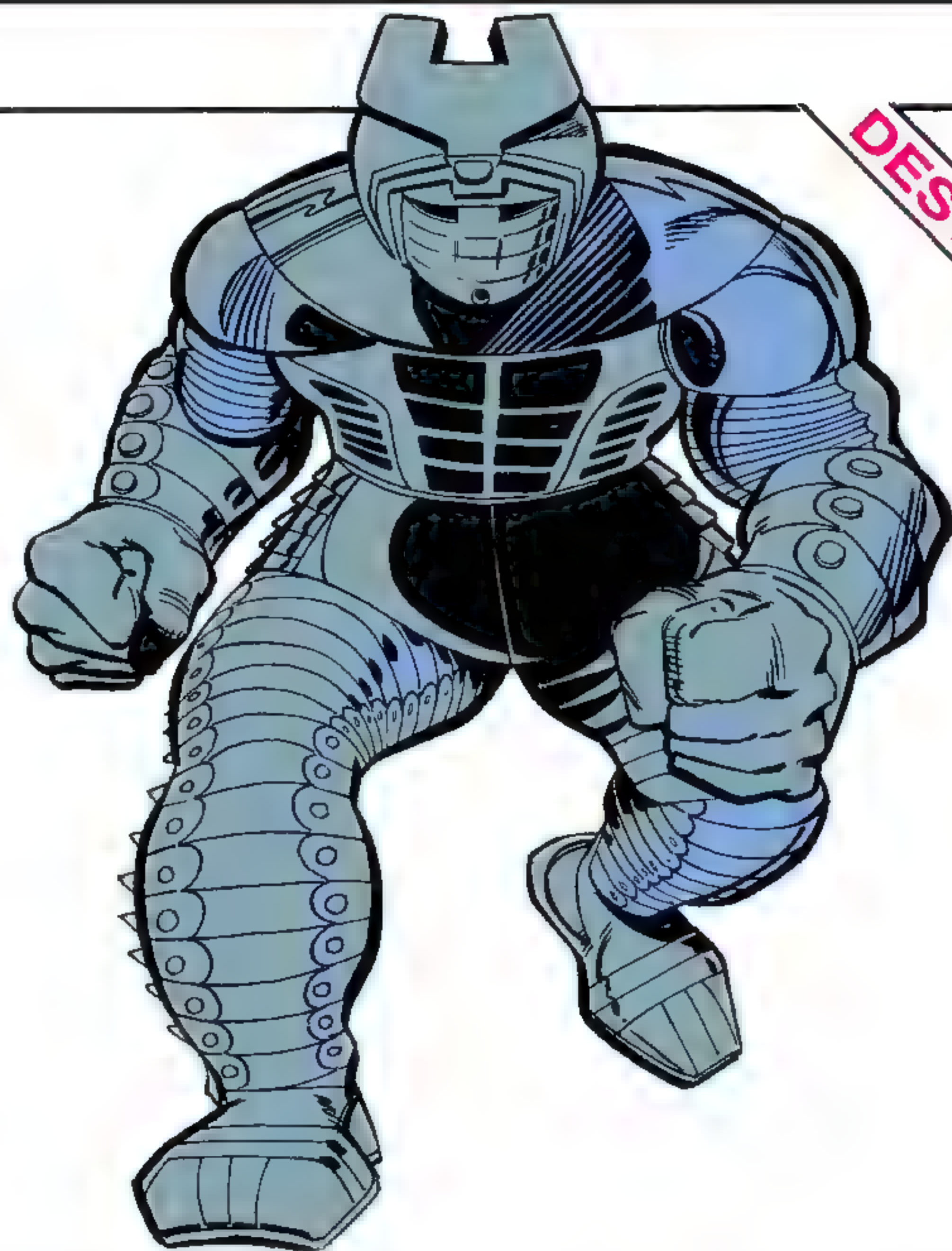
DESTROYER

The Destroyer was an enchanted suit of armor in humanoid form which, when animated by the life force of a sentient being, exercised immense powers which made it virtually invincible. It was composed of an unknown metal of Asgardian origin and was enchanted by Odin so that its metal was harder even than adamantium (see *Ultron*) or uru (see *Thor's Hammer*) and was therefore almost totally indestructible. Ordinarily the Destroyer stood at a height of 6 1/2 feet and weighed 850 pounds; however, when animated by the life force of all the gods of Asgard, the Destroyer grew to a height of 2000 feet. No one could physically wear the armor of the Destroyer; the Destroyer's armor could be disassembled by no known means. Rather, one projected one's life force into the Destroyer's form, leaving his or her own body in a state of entranced paralysis. Usually, the transfer of life force was achieved when a willing subject stood within arm's length of the Destroyer. Masters of mystical powers, such as Odin or Loki, could accomplish the transfer over great distances.

The Destroyer was mystically "programmed" to battle and to destroy. Usually, a human or Asgardian who projected his or her life force into the Destroyer was best able to control it if he or she was using it for destructive ends. A human or Asgardian who had no clear purpose in mind, or who attempted to use the Destroyer for peaceful ends, would inevitably lose control of it. That person's or god's life force would then remain entrapped within the Destroyer, helpless to control its actions as its destructive "programming" took over. Worse, if the human or Asgardian unwillingly had his or her life force projected into the Destroyer by a mystical spell, his or her personality would take on the destructive urges of the Destroyer. Only by a tremendous act of will could the human or Asgardian manage to reassert his or her personality and thus take control of the Destroyer under such a circumstance. The only being who projected his life force into the Destroyer and was fully capable of controlling it from within under all circumstances was Odin, who is the leader of the gods of Asgard, and who had the Destroyer constructed.

When animated, the Destroyer remained psychically linked to the body of the person whose life force it contained, thereby preventing that body from dying. The body of the person in mental possession of the Destroyer, therefore, was the Destroyer's sole weakness. A sufficiently powerful spell directed towards the mind of that person could reverse the transfer of life force, causing the Destroyer to become inanimate.

The limits of the Destroyer's super-humanoid physical strength were never measured. Because the Destroyer was not itself a living being, it was not affected by Odin's spell that prevented anyone except Thor from lifting his hammer. The Destroyer projected bolts of an unknown form of energy which could shatter any known substance, including uru, the Asgardian metal from which Thor's hammer was made. The Destroyer could project magnetic energy and flames which reached solar levels of heat. It could transmute and rearrange atoms and molecules so as to change one form of matter into another. It could also alter the density of matter, and convert solid matter to liquid or vice versa. The



Destroyer's most formidable weapon was its disintegrator beam, which could annihilate anything. To disintegrate something, the Destroyer would lower its visor; the destructive energy would build atop the visor and then fire outward from it.

The Destroyer was created roughly a thousand years ago by the greatest Asgardian craftsmen on order of Odin, lord of Asgard (see *Odin*), to battle the enormous alien Celestials (see *Celestials*). The Celestials had conducted genetic experimentation on what would become humanity. They intended to return in a millennium, when superhumanly powered beings would have begun emerging in large numbers on Earth, to begin their judgment of the human race. Odin and Earth's other gods were determined to prevent the Celestials from destroying Earth, but the Celestials had demonstrated that even the powers of one of their number far exceeded those of Earth's gods. Upon the Destroyer's completion, Odin, Zeus, and the other leading gods of Earth bestowed a fraction of their powers upon it, thereby giving it great strength and energy-manipulating abilities. Once the Third Host had left, Odin concealed the Destroyer within a temple he himself created in Indochina, and then concealed the temple within a plateau. Thus, he hoped, the Destroyer would remain out of the reach of anyone who would use it for evil.

The Destroyer remained inert nearly until the return of the Celestials. However, Loki, searching for a means of vengeance upon Thor, magically destroyed the plateau concealing the temple within which the Destroyer stood, and led an unscrupulous hunter, Buck Franklin, to it. Loki caused Franklin's life force to enter the Destroyer, and it battled Thor within the temple. However, by pretending to endanger Franklin's inert body, Thor bluffed Franklin's consciousness into returning to Franklin's form. Thor then demolished the temple, burying the Destroyer within it, and rescuing Franklin. Sometime later, while in exile, Loki projected his own consciousness into the Destroyer and, using its power to

traverse dimensions, sent it to Asgard to attack Odin. Odin, however, located Loki's body and directed a mystical bolt towards Loki's brain, causing Loki's consciousness to be pulled back into his own body and to retreat into unconsciousness.

The Destroyer was subsequently animated by the goddess Sif in a plot by Loki and Karnilla the Norn Queen, and by Professor Clement Holmes who "entered" the Destroyer by accident. Thor, oblivious of his father's plan for the Destroyer, gave the construct to Galactus for use as his herald. Loki later stole it from Galactus for use in another scheme against Thor, with Balder as the animating persona.

By this time the Fourth Host had arrived, and sometime thereafter, Odin decided that the time had come to do battle with them. He therefore drew the life forces of all Asgardians except the absent Thor into himself, and then projected this vast collective consciousness into the Destroyer. The Destroyer grew to enormous size, and, wielding the enormous Odinsword, invaded the Fourth Host's South American base. Yet, inconceivably powerful as the Destroyer now was, it was unable to inflict any serious damage upon any of the gathered Celestials, despite its best efforts. Then the Celestials fired bolts of energy in unison at the Destroyer, which reduced it to a slag of molten metal, and set adrift the life forces of all the Asgardians. Arishem, the leader of the Celestials on Earth, then melted the Odinsword into nothingness.

Gaea, the elder Earth goddess, persuaded the Celestials to deliver a favorable judgement on Earth by presenting them with twelve noble young humans who had evolved into "godhood," as examples of what humanity was becoming. By gathering mystic force from Earth's other pantheons of gods, Thor was able to resurrect Odin, who in turn revived the other Asgardians. The Destroyer has, however, been permanently destroyed.

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #118

Final appearance: THOR #300



ENCHANTRESS

Real Name: Amora

Identity: Secret. Her existence is not known to the general populace of Earth.

Legal status: Citizen of Asgard

Place of birth: Asgard

Known relatives: None

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #103

Origin: Amora was born somewhere in Asgard, her parentage unknown. While still in adolescence, she ran away to the land of the Norns and apprenticed herself to Karnilla, one of the most powerful sorceresses in all Asgard. There she studied all the basic arts of Asgardian magic until Karnilla expelled her for being too undisciplined. She picked up further sorcerous skills from seducing other Asgardian mages and wizards.

Height: 6' 3"

Weight: 450 lbs

Eyes: Green

Hair: Blonde

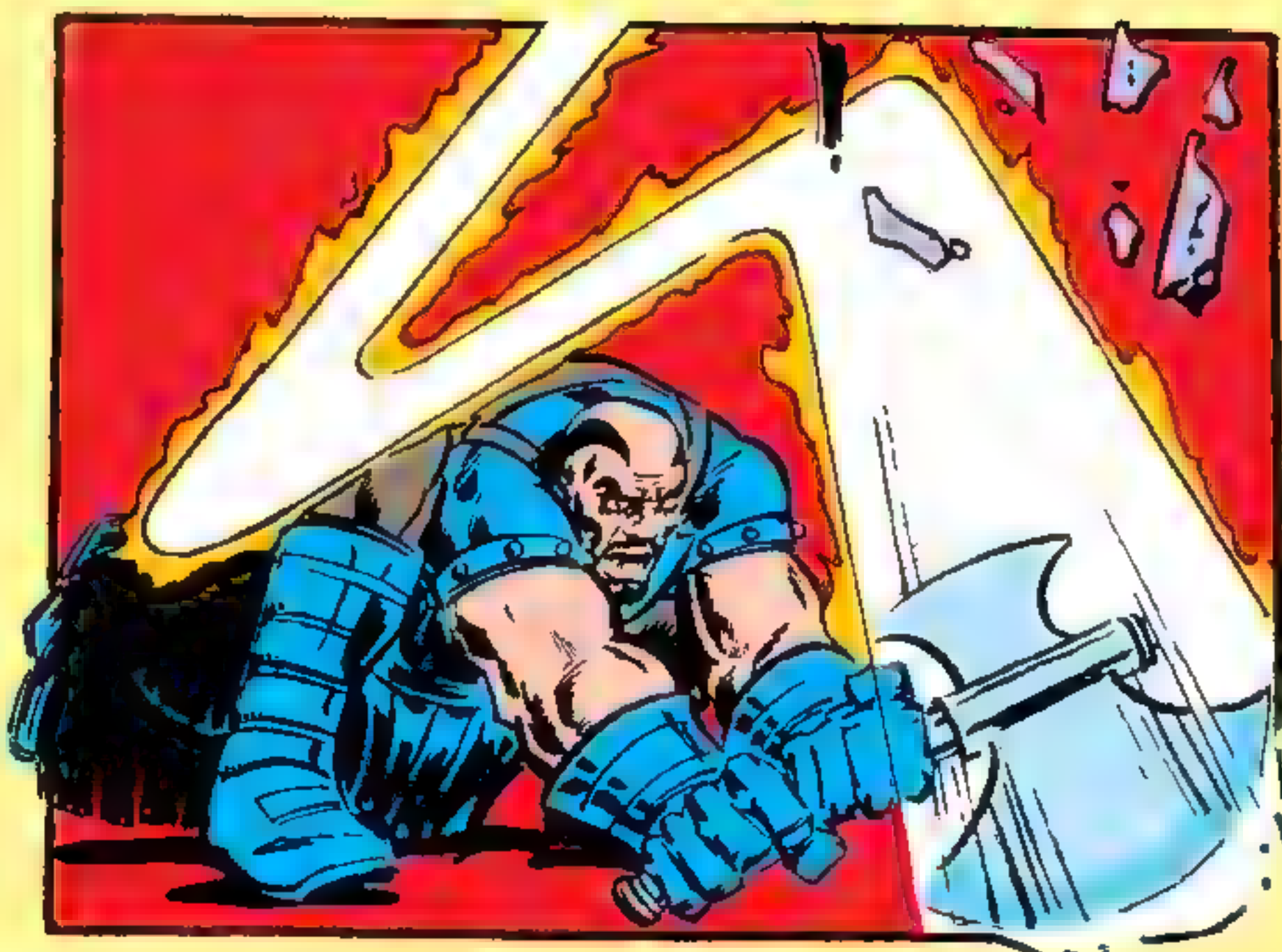
Powers: The Enchantress possesses the conventional attributes of an Asgardian woman ("goddess"), as well as a mastery over certain sorcerous disciplines. Like all Asgardians, she is extremely long-lived (though not immortal like the Olympians), superhumanly strong (the average Asgardian female can lift about 25 tons), immune to all disease, and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about three times denser than human flesh and bone, contributing to Asgardians' superhuman weight.) Her Asgardian metabolism gives her far greater than human endurance at all physical activities. The Enchantress rarely exercises any of her physical abilities except those that pertain to the amatory arts.

The Enchantress's magical powers derive from two main sources: her innate capacity to manipulate ambient magical energy honed through practice, and her acquired knowledge of spells and enchantments of Asgardian origin. Her ability to wield magical energy for personal use, while not as great as such arch-sorceresses as Karnilla, still qualifies her as among the top twenty magic practioners in Asgard. The main focus of her powers has been the enhancement of her natural beauty and allure so that men, mortal or otherwise, are overwhelmed with desire for her. She has enchanted her lips so that a single kiss is sufficient to make virtually any man a slave to her will, obedient to her every command, for about a week. Subsequent kisses enable her to enthrall someone's will indefinitely. She occasionally diverts her concentration of magic from her personal allure in order to form rudimentary magical power-bolts. These bolts, which have a maximum concussive effect of 1 pound of TNT, weaken her domination over the men in her power.

Her knowledge of arcane lore enables her to cast spells with a variety of specific effects. Among the many spells she has employed include illusion-casting, temporary paralysis, deflection of matter and energy, interdimensional travel, and elemental conversion. These spells derive their potency from Asgardian sources (such as power-objects or entities), and thus are most potent when used in the dimension of Asgard itself. A prolonged absense from Asgard tends to diminish her powers, though they never fade completely.

Weapons: On occasion, the Enchantress employs various mystical artifacts, potions, and power-objects. She has, for instance, kept the soul of Brunnhilde the Valkyrie entrapped in a crystalline gem, using her own magicks to assume the Valkyrie's form.





EXECUTIONER

Real Name: Skurge

Occupation: Warlord

Identity: Secret. His existence is not known to the general public of Earth.

Legal status: Citizen of Jotunheim, Asgard

Other current aliases: None

Place of birth: Jotunheim, Asgard

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Frequent partner of Amora the Enchantress

Base of operations: Asgard (occasionally Earth)

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #103

Origin: Skurge was the illegitimate son of a Storm Giant and a goddess, born in the Asgardian province of Skarnheim. Ostracized by the Storm Giants because of his relatively diminutive size, he grew up to be a great warrior and giant-killer. It was through the widespread killing of his father's people, the Storm Giants, that he gained the epithet, "The Executioner." Living for years a life of grim solitude, he was seduced into accompanying Amora the Enchantress on her many conquests of both Asgard and Earth. But while the Executioner is a love-slave to the Enchantress, she continually withholds her favors from him to keep him in thrall.

Height: 7' 2"

Weight: 1100 lbs

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Black

Powers: The Executioner has vast superhuman strength, being part Asgardian god and part Asgardian Storm Giant. He is capable of lifting (pressing) approximately 65 tons, enough power to beat a 3-ton iron wrecking ball to the thickness of a manhole cover with four blows. His skin and muscle tissue is far denser than human, able to resist ballistic impacts up to and including .50 caliber machine gun bullets. His superhuman metabolism enables him to withstand temperature extremes from 100° below zero to 2,000° Fahrenheit. He has virtually inexhaustible stamina, not tiring appreciably after any exertion. Although Asgardians are not immortal like the Olympians, they are extraordinarily long-lived and slow-aging. Their recuperative powers are far greater than those of human beings, and they do not suffer from any diseases.

The Executioner also has the visual acuity of a hunting falcon, able to discern at 100 feet what the average human being can at 10 feet.

Weapons: The Executioner wields a double-bladed axe with a three-foot handle and a blade two feet wide at its greatest width. It weighs 280 pounds. The Enchantress has imbued it with the ability to cleave small rifts in the fabric of space by a combination of mental command and movement of the blade. By spinning it around him he can create large enough rifts to pass himself or another being through (much in the same manner as Thor's hammer). By a simple slicing motion, he can create a small rift to permit extra- or interdimensional energy to radiate through, such as blazing stellar-like energies or intense cold from Earth's arctic regions. The dimension into which he creates a portal is determined by mental command.

FIRELORD

Real Name: Pyreus Kril

Occupation: Former starship captain, former herald of Galactus

Identity: Unknown to general populace of Earth

Legal status: Citizen of Xandar

Former aliases: Nova Centurion

Place of birth: Xandar, planet in Tranta system, Andromeda Galaxy

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Ex-member of Nova Corps

Base of operations: Outer space

First appearance: THOR #225

Origin: Pyreus Kril was serving as first officer aboard the Xandarian explorer ship *Way-Opener* when his commander, Gabriel Lan, was unexpectedly abducted by a teleportation beam. Vowing to rescue his commander and friend, Kril assumed command of the *Way-Opener* and began to pursue the huge ship that transmitted the beam. Kril would later learn that the ship belonged to Galactus, the world-devourer, who had been seeking a new herald (since his first herald, the Silver Surfer, betrayed him) and found a worthy candidate in Gabriel Lan. Using his cosmic power, Galactus transformed Lan into the Air-Walker. For years, Lan served Galactus faithfully, while his ex-crewman Kril followed Galactus's wake of destruction. When Galactus was attacked by a powerful race called the Ovoids, the Air-Walker was slain defending his master. Galactus transferred his herald's dwindling life-force into that of a replica, but the replica was not enough like his loyal herald to please Galactus. Thus he dispatched the Air-Walker automaton to Earth to summon the Silver Surfer back to active duty. The Surfer refused, destroying the automaton in the process. Persuaded to leave Earth without the Surfer, Galactus returned to the stars heraldless, not even bothering to claim the remains of the Air-Walker replica.

It was then that Pyreus Kril caught up with him. Boldly teleporting himself aboard Galactus's ship, Kril demanded the release of his former commander. Galactus was impressed by the Xandarian spaceman's determination, and offered to tell Kril of his commander's fate if he agreed to become his new herald. Kril agreed and was transformed by the power of Galactus into Firelord. Though Galactus kept his side of the bargain, he soon suppressed the knowledge he had given Kril so that he might send him on a mission to Earth. Firelord was released from active service when the Earth god Thor offered Galactus the Asgardian construct called the Destroyer in exchange for Firelord's freedom. Unlike the Surfer, who was sentenced to remain on Earth for his treason, Firelord was free to leave. Yet Firelord chose to remain because of his subliminal memory that the Earth was the final resting place of the remains of his friend. Months later, when the Air-Walker automaton reactivated itself, he remembered the reason for his compulsion to remain. Taking custody of the automaton (wrecked once more in battle with Thor), Firelord bore him into space, where he buried the remains on an asteroid in their home star system. Free of his only tie to Earth, Firelord has since wandered the stars, searching for his destiny.

Height: 6' 4" **Weight:** 220 lbs (Earth gravity)

Eyes: White **Hair:** Yellow

Unusual features: Firelord's hair is tinged with cosmic flame.

Powers: Firelord possesses the ability to manipulate cosmic energy in the form of stellar fire. His entire organic carbon-based body was transformed to accommodate the nuclear energies that course through him. These energies make him the humanoid equivalent of a miniature sun. Projected from any point on his body at mental command, Firelord's energies encompass the entire electromagnetic spectrum possessed by a star: heat, light, gravity, radio waves, and charged particles. The maximum amount of energy he can produce at once is determined by his mass. When all the atoms of his body are in fusion, his energy level is equivalent to the outer layers of a small star. The

maximum amount of heat he can produce is 850,000° Fahrenheit. The maximum amount of light he can produce is equivalent to 100,000,000 candlepower. By the slightest manifestation of his stellar powers, he can burn through any earthly substance (with the possible exception of adamantium). He can project a stream of fire resembling a solar flare for distances measured in the hundreds of miles. Firelord is able to control the path of his cosmic fire to such an extent that he can project a sustained ring at a fixed distance around a person or object.

By utilizing his cosmic power uni-directionally, Firelord can fly at near-light speeds through interstellar space. (Flying at such speeds near planetary bodies could cause devastating gravitational disturbances.) Firelord can even traverse hyperspace without danger to himself. Firelord uses the gravitational fields of stars to help him brake his speed.

As a consequence of his cosmic form and metabolism, Firelord is far stronger and more durable than a human being. If he channeled his cosmic energy into an act of physical strength, he

could easily lift (press) weights of 50 tons. Although he still possesses a solid physical body, he is virtually impervious to most forms of physical harm. His body automatically incinerates any projectile before it reaches the surface of his "skin." He is immune to disease, aging, and muscle fatigue. He no longer needs to eat since his body takes its nourishment from the carbon-carbon cycle of solar fusion. He no longer needs to breathe air and hence can exist indefinitely in the hard vacuum of space. Firelord's major limitation is that his brain, still organic in perceptions and function, needs occasional sleep to resuscitate itself. It is possible that a severe concussion to his body could cause temporary unconsciousness, but it would take radical molecular dispersal to kill Firelord.

Weapons: Firelord carries a staff five feet in length, the ends of which he keeps ablaze with his cosmic flame. He uses this fire-staff as a striking weapon and an astrogational aid. Firelord generally projects his cosmic flame through the stick rather than directly from his body.





GEIRRODUR

Real Name: Geirrodur

Identity: Unknown to the populace of Earth

Former aliases: Weaponsmith

Marital status: Married

Known relatives: Ulla (wife), Rodi (son)

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #101

Origin: Geirrodur was born to the Rock Trolls that lived beneath the ground in Asgard. His father was the master blacksmith and weapons maker of the tribe, and taught Geirrodur all the arts of the trade. When his father died in a war against the Storm Giants, Geirrodur took his father's place. His fame spread throughout Asgard, finally reaching the palace of Odin himself. When Loki, god of mischief, sought to appease Odin's wrath over a prank he had pulled on the young Sif, he went to the Trolls to acquire gifts. Through trickery, Loki got Geirrodur to forge the hammer Mjolnir out of the mystic uru metal that the Trolls mined. Loki returned to Asgard with the hammer, among other gifts, and escaped Odin's wrath. (Odin later enchanted the hammer and permitted his son Thor to earn the right to use it.) In return for the favor, Loki helped Geirrodur overthrow the current King of the Trolls, Veidemarir. Geirrodur has ruled the Trolls ever since that day millennia ago, having forged a mystic spear out of the uru metal as a token of power. Among Geirrodur's finest accomplishments during his reign was the design and construction of burrowing machines which, due to the uru metal of their bits and scoops, could actually dig holes into other dimensions. Geirrodur's machine has even dug a transdimensional tunnel from the caverns of Asgard into the bowels of the Earth. Geirrodur's rule was only once opposed: for a brief time the Troll warrior Ulik usurped the throne.

Height: 6' **Weight:** 480 lbs **Eyes:** Brown **Hair:** Orange-brown

Unusual features: All Asgardian Trolls are apelike in build, and covered with coarse, orange-brown fur.

Powers: Geirrodur possesses the average physical attributes of his race: greater than human strength (able to lift about 25 tons), endurance (about 2.5 times that of the average human), and durability (a Troll's hide is far tougher than human skin). Trolls are, however, generally slower than human beings, and are not quite as intelligent. Geirrodur is a genius among Trolls (as well as being a master craftsman) but his intellect would only rate slightly above the human average. Trolls require less oxygen than human beings, making them well suited for life underground. Their vision extends far into the infra-red wavelengths, enabling them to see quite well in the relative darkness of the earth. Trolls are immune to most Earth diseases, and have natural lifespans of about 1,500 years.

Weapons: Geirrodur carries a spear called Tordenstok. It is made of uru, a metal found only in the realm of the Trolls, and has certain mystical properties as well as being virtually unbreakable.



GREY GARGOYLE

Real Name: Paul Pierre Duval

Occupation: Former chemist, now professional criminal

Identity: Publicly known

Legal status: French citizen with criminal record

Place of birth: Fontainebleau, France

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: None

Base of operations: Mobile

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #107

Origin: Paul Duval was a young chemist working for a commercial pharmaceutical outfit in Paris when he accidentally spilled a potion contaminated by some unknown, organic substance on his right hand. To his surprise and dismay, his hand began to turn to a stone-like material still capable of movement. Accidentally touching his other hand, he soon learned that he could transform his entire body into the stone-like material, simply by rubbing his hand over the surface of his body. Further, he discovered that any matter he touched also turned to stone, although it was incapable of movement like himself. Mercenary by nature, Duval decided to exploit his bizarre power for personal gain, and turned to theft. He soon was bored of the ease with which he could steal, and decided to go to America to wrest the secret of immortality from the allegedly immortal Thor. Calling himself the Grey Gargoyle, Duval has proved a formidable adversary for a number of crimefighters, including the entire contingent of Avengers.

Height: 5'11"

Weight: 175 lbs, (stone) 750 lbs.

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Brown

Powers: The Grey Gargoyle possesses the ability to transform the substance of any organic or inorganic object into immobile, granite-like rock by touching it with his permanently transformed right hand. This process involves a near-instantaneous atom by atom exchange with a stone-like substance which, in a manner yet unrevealed, occurs upon contact with the Gargoyle's right hand. The maximum volume of matter which can be transformed at a single touch is about 10 ± 2 cubic feet, equivalent to an object the size of a bathtub. (An average human being possesses a volume of 1.8 cubic feet.) The Grey Gargoyle cannot control the extent of the transformations: every time his hand touches something, it transforms the maximum amount of molecularly-contiguous matter it can. (Molecular contiguity involves the magnetic flux permeability of groups of molecules determining molecular cohesion.) Thus, if he touched the instrument panel of an airplane, he would transform its metallic parts to the full extent of his power or until the metal was interrupted by some dissimilar substance, such as plastic. If he were to touch a human being who happened to be touching another human being at that moment, only the person he touched himself would be transformed, despite the fact that both persons were composed of the same organic substance. This is because the two human beings, despite being composed of the same substance, are not molecularly contiguous. The only exception to the molecular-contiguity limitation is certain substances (like most fabrics) which for reasons as yet unknown are "transparent" to the transformation process, allowing it to



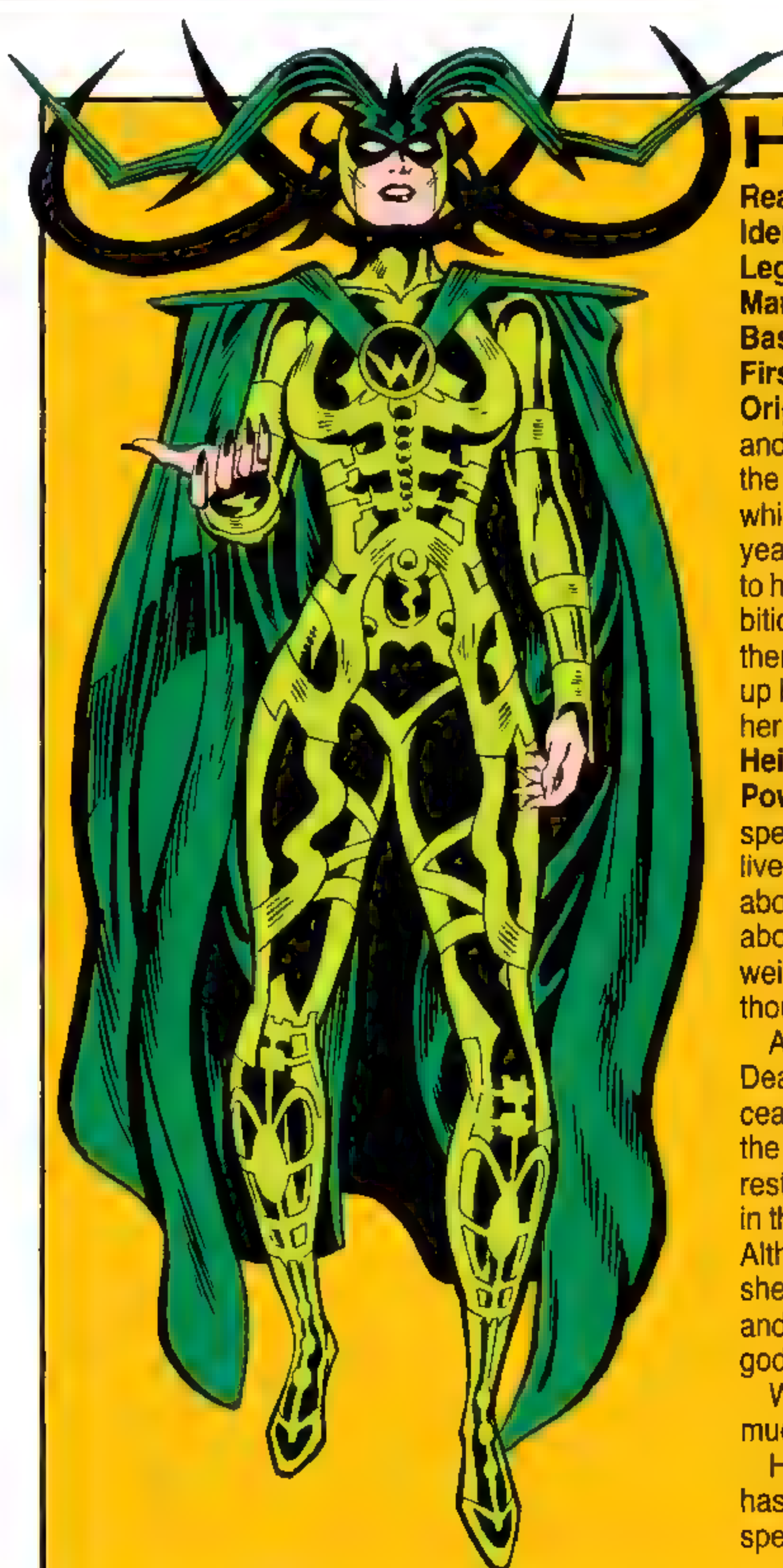
occur both to it and through it. Thus, if the Gargoyle were to touch a person's arm through his clothing, the transformation will not only affect the clothing but the body underneath it. A sufficient number of layers of clothing, however, will protect the body beneath from being turned to stone (though wearing clothing made of stone may be quite debilitating in itself).

The Grey Gargoyle's transformations last for about an hour, after which time the objects revert to their normal state. The period of time that an object will remain transformed after being touched cannot be increased by repeated touching. Once a person reverts to normal, however, he or she can be transformed again indefinitely. People do not seem to suffer any ill-effects other than disorientation upon returning to normal. While a person is stone-like, he or she is as susceptible to damage as granite statuary, which is their approximate equivalent in material.

The Grey Gargoyle can touch himself with his altered hand and turn himself into a living

statue with all of his former sentience and mobility intact. This composition of stone-like molecules grants the Grey Gargoyle the impact resistance of stone (around 80,000 pounds per square inch), increased strength (he can lift, or press, about 11 tons), and temperature extremes (-120° to $18,000^{\circ}$ Fahrenheit). He retains his normal human reflexes and speed in his stone-like state. If the Grey Gargoyle was damaged while in his stone-like state, an analogue of that injury would appear when he reverted to his normal state. Despite his weight and mass, the Gargoyle's powerful legs enable him to perform a standing high-jump of 20 feet.

The Grey Gargoyle prevents unwanted use of his power by wearing a specially-treated glove which is particularly non-conductive, and thus is unable to be transformed into stone. The glove has small area in the palm that is usually left open to allow the use of his power at any time. There does not seem to be any limit to the number of times the Gargoyle can apply his touch and effect a change.



HELA

Real Name: Hela

Identity: Public knowledge to the citizens of Asgard

Legal status: Citizen of Asgard, ruler of Hel and Niffleheim

Marital status: Single

Base of operations: Hel and Niffleheim, realm of Asgard

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #102

Origin: Hela was born ages ago to the being who would one day be called Odin and a goddess whose name and image have been lost in antiquity. On the day of her maturity, Odin appointed her goddess and ruler of the northernmost realms of the dead. Her special dominion was over the souls of all who did not die in battle, while Odin himself built the palace Valhalla to house the souls of all those who died as heroes. In recent years, when Odin's attention had strayed from the maintenance of Valhalla, Hela tried to annex that realm to her own, hoping to consolidate her power over all Asgard's dead. Eventually Odin grew aware of her ambitions and opposed them. In the course of battle, Odin's band of Valkyries, the custodians of Valhalla, lost their physical forms, no longer able to travel from Valhalla except in their wraith-like astral forms. Hela gave up her contest for Valhalla when Odin vowed to keep better watch over it in the future, and she returned to her realm.

Height: 6' 6"

Weight: 500 lbs

Eyes: Green

Hair: None

Powers: Hela possesses the conventional attributes of an Asgardian woman ("goddess") as well as certain special abilities that pertain to her role as a local death goddess. Like all Asgardians, she is extremely long-lived (though not immortal like the Olympians), super-strong (the average Asgardian female can lift (press) about 25 tons), immune to all diseases, and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about 3 times as dense as similar human tissue, contributing to all Asgardians' superhuman strength and weight.) Her Asgardian metabolism gives her far greater than human endurance at all physical activities, though Hela rarely feels obliged to perform undue exercise.

As a goddess of death, Hela holds the power of life and death over her kinsmen, the gods of Asgard. Death for an Asgardian is somewhat different than death for a mortal. In both cases, the corporeal body ceases all functions and activities, but whereas mortal spirits flee the physical form at the moment of death, the spirits of gods remain in their bodies until the death-goddess draws it out and dispatches it to its final resting place. These spirits (or astral-selves) remain integral for eternity and reside in certain twilight realms in the dimension of Asgard like Hel and Niffleheim, where they take on a quasi-physical tangible existence. Although Hela is usually content to wait until an Asgardian is on the verge of succumbing to wounds before she touches him or her and draws the spirit from the body, she can also touch perfectly healthy Asgardians and kill them with her touch if she so chooses. She also has the power to restore life to recently deceased gods as long as their spirits have not left the sheaths of their bodies. She does not exercise this power often.

While Hela's touch is also fatal to mortals, she does not generally leave the dimension of Asgard or have much traffic with human lives. The souls of immortals are her province, not those of mortals.

Hela is able to travel about in her astral form, possessing the same powers of death as her physical form has. Because of her Asgardian metabolism, she does not have any limitation on the amount of time she can spend out of her physical form, unlike mortal astral projectionists.

HELIOPOLIS GODS

The Gods of Heliopolis are a race of powerful human-like entities who possess god-like powers and were worshipped by the ancient Egyptians from five to three thousand years ago. Their precise origin, like that of all the races of Earth-Gods, are lost in legend. At the time of the close of the Twenty-First Dynasty of Egypt (about 945 B.C.), the Heliopolitans were imprisoned by their treacherous kinsman Seth, a fate that they escaped in very recent times. Heliopolis ("City of the Sun") is a realm analogous to Asgard and Olympus, located in another dimension adjacent to Earth. The Heliopolitans today have little traffic with humanity.



HORUS

Falcon-God

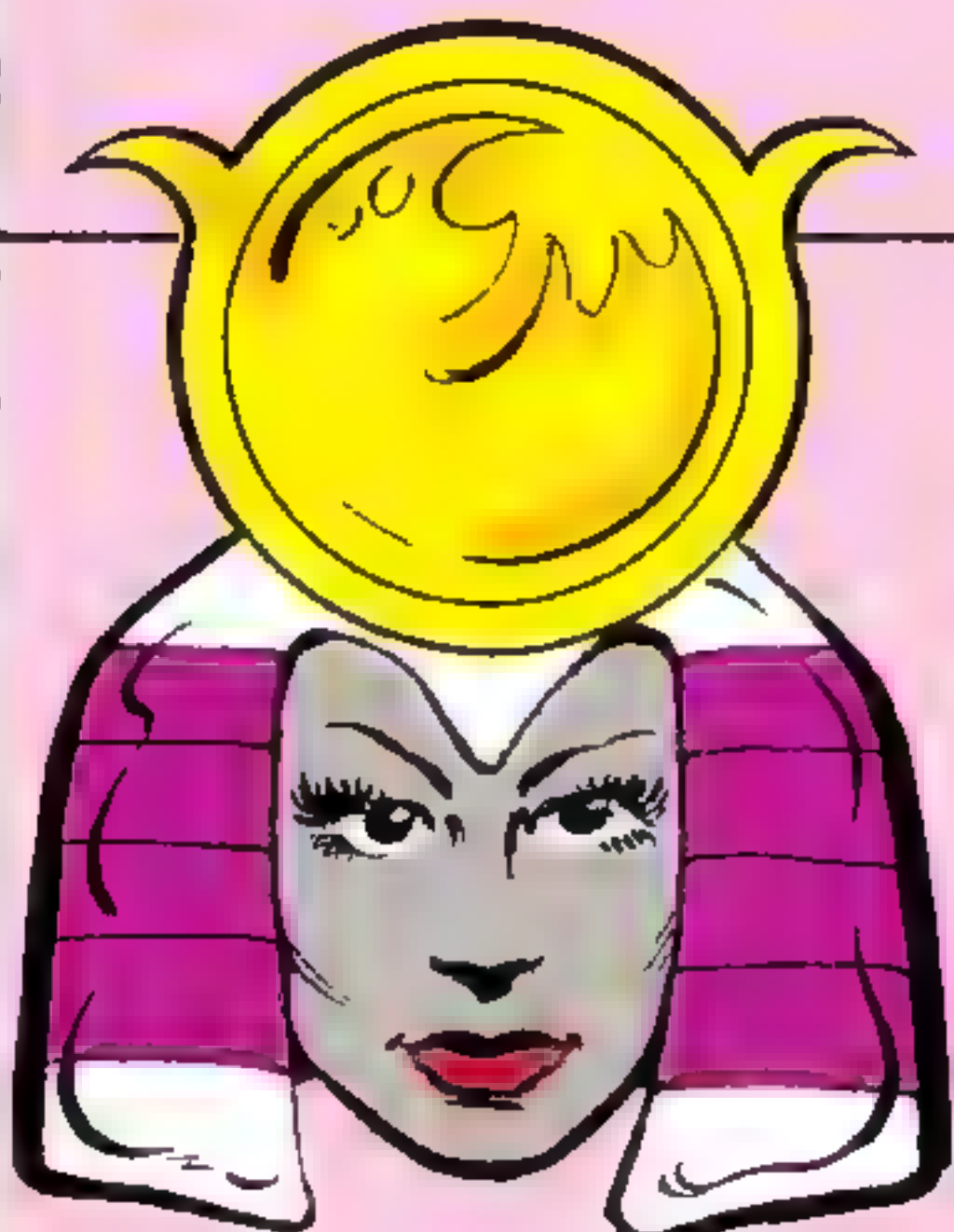
First appeared in THOR #240



OSIRIS

Sky-Father

First appeared in THOR #240



ISIS

Goddess of Fertility

First appeared in THOR #240



SETH

God of Evil

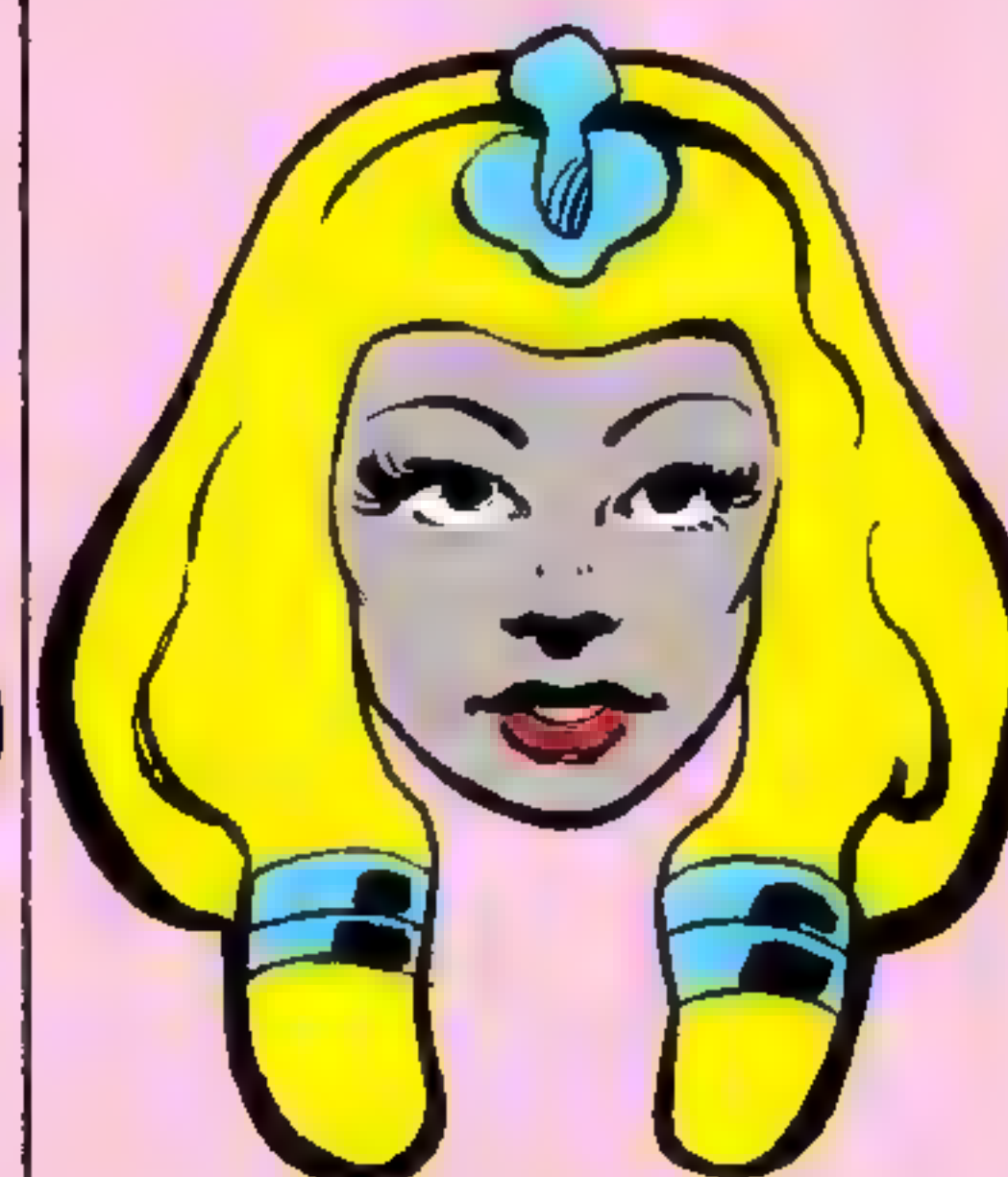
First appeared in THOR #240



GEB

God of the Earth

First appeared in THOR #241



NUT

Goddess of the Heavens

First appeared in THOR #241

HERCULES

Real Name: Heracles ("Hercules" is the Latin form of his ancient Greek name)

Occupation: Adventurer

Identity: Publicly known

Legal status: Citizen of Olympus with provisional United States citizenship due to his Avengers reservist status

Place of birth: Thebes, Greece

Marital status: Formerly married to Deianeira (deceased), married to the goddess Hebe (separated).

Known relatives: Zeus (father), Alcmena (mother, deceased), Amphitryon (foster father, deceased), Iphicles (half-brother, deceased), Neptune (Poseidon) and Pluto (uncles), Venus (Aphrodite, "cousin"), Ares, Apollo, Hermes, Hephæstus (half-brothers), Athena, Artemis (half-sisters)

Group affiliation: Gods of Olympus, Argonauts (assemblage of many of Greece's greatest heroes), Avengers, Champions of Los Angeles (disbanded)

Base of operations: Olympus. In the recent past Hercules has spent time in New York City and Los Angeles.

First appearance: THOR ANNUAL #1

Origin: Recognizing the need for a son who would be powerful enough to defend both the Olympian gods and humanity from future dangers he foresaw, Zeus seduced the mortal woman Alcmena in the guise of her husband, King Amphitryon of Troezen. Thanks to Zeus's enchantment, Hercules was born with the potential for incredible strength, which he first displayed before he was even one year old by strangling two serpents which attacked him. As an adult, Hercules is best known for his celebrated Twelve Labors, which were performed in part to prove his worthiness for immortality to Zeus. (One of these Labors, the cleansing of the Augean Stables, was actually performed by the Eternal named Hero, who was sometimes mistaken for Hercules.) In the course of these Labors, Hercules provoked the wrath of three immortals who remain his enemies to this day. By slaughtering the man-eating Stymphean Birds, he enraged the war god Ares, to whom they were sacred. In temporarily capturing Cerberus, the three-headed hound that serves as guardian to the Olympian underworld (not to be confused with the shape-shifting giant of the same name), Hercules offended Pluto, the lord of that realm. By killing the Nemean Lion, the Hydra, and other creatures spawned by the inconceivably grotesque and powerful monster Typhoeus, Hercules gained the bitter enmity of Typhon, the immortal humanoid offspring of Typhoeus and a Titaness. However, it was the centaur Nessus who caused Hercules's mortal demise. Nessus kidnapped Hercules's wife Deianeira, whereupon Hercules shot him with an arrow. Feigning a wish to make amends, the dying centaur told Deianeira how to make a love charm from his allegedly enchanted blood, aware that it was now tainted with the lethal poison of the Hydra, in which Hercules had dipped his arrows. Some time after Nessus's death, Deianeira, distraught over her husband's latest infidelity, rubbed the supposed love charm into Hercules's shirt. After putting the garment on, Hercules was wracked with agonizing pain. Horrified at what she had done, Deianeira killed herself. Dying, Hercules mounted a funeral pyre and had it set afire. Zeus then intervened, consuming the pyre with his thunderbolts and bringing Hercules to Olympus to be made a true immortal.

Height: 6' 5"

Eyes: Blue

Weight: 325 lbs

Hair: Dark brown

Powers: Hercules is not only the physically strongest of the Olympian gods, but is also one of the strongest humanoid beings to ever walk the Earth. He is able to lift (press) 100 tons, and has been observed to lift and carry a starship, drop-kick a bulldozer, and lift and hurl a giant sequoia. (An average male Olympian god is capable of lifting about 25 tons.) Hercules's stamina is practically limitless,

so he does not tire appreciably after any exertion.

As true immortals, the Olympian gods do not age and are not susceptible to disease. Although they can be wounded in battle, they cannot die by any conventional means, and have a rapid healing rate. Hercules has a greater resistance to physical injury than any other Olympian god except for Zeus, and possibly Neptune and Pluto. Bullets cause Hercules only minor irritation, he has at least a measure of invulnerability to flame, and he can even survive unprotected in the vacuum of space for a brief period of time. Only an injury of such magnitude that it incinerated him or dispersed a major portion of his bodily molecules could kill Hercules. In at least some such cases, Zeus or one of the other gods might still be able to resurrect him.

Hercules has highly developed leg muscles, although they do not match those of the Hulk. Hercules can make a standing high jump of at least 100 feet in Earth's gravity.

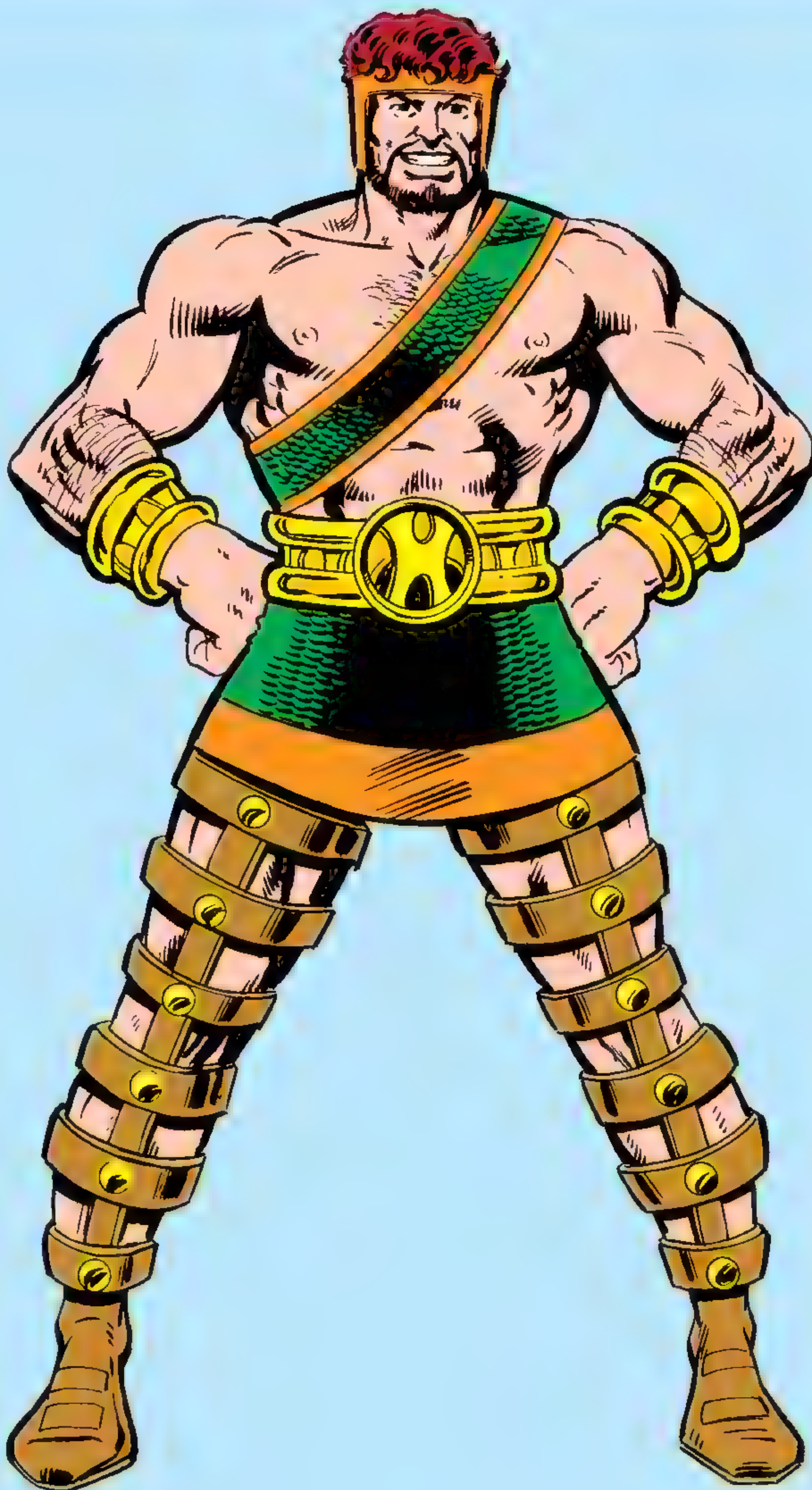
As Olympus's greatest warrior, Hercules is highly expert in traditional means of hand-to-hand combat,

as well as in wrestling. Hercules is also very highly skilled in ancient Greek athletic abilities such as the discus and hammer throws.

Weapons: Hercules was famed in ancient Greece for his mastery of the bow and arrow, but today, because of his bitter memories of Nessus's treachery and Deianeira's suicide, he prefers not to use them.

Before he came to live on Olympus, Hercules's favorite weapon was his large wooden club. The club was supplanted by his current weapon, his Golden Mace, which is not actually made of gold but was forged by the god Hephæstus from enchanted adamantite, the legendary substance after which Dr. Myron MacLain named his artificially created adamantium. The Mace is therefore virtually indestructible, and has survived direct blows from Thor's hammer.

Before taking up residence on Olympus, Hercules almost always wore the nearly indestructible pelt of the Nemean Lion as a shield against injury. Now that he is fully a god he no longer wears it.



HIGH EVOLUTIONARY

Real Name: Herbert Edgar Wyndham

Occupation: Geneticist

Identity: Secret

Legal status: British citizen with no criminal record

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: Manchester, England

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Founder of the Knights of Wundagore

Base of operations: Currently Earth

First appearance: THOR #134

Origin: Herbert Wyndham was a student attending Oxford University in the 1930's who built a machine capable of accelerating the genetic evolution of living organisms. His first test subject was his pet dog which he managed to evolve into a creature who stood upright and had the intelligence of a chimpanzee. (The dog was accidentally killed by a hunter.) His experiments having provoked anger and hostility among his peers, Wyndham left the university to build a research center where he could carry on his experiments without detractors. Joined by his friend Jonathan Drew, who specialized in the study of arthropods, Wyndham found the site for his facility on Wundagore Mountain in Transia, a country near Yugoslavia where Drew's wife was born. The two men purchased a tract of land on the mountain and discovered a rich uranium deposit of their property which they converted into working capital. In a matter of years, they built a citadel of advanced scientific research. Wyndham's work centered on the improvement of his genetic accelerator while Drew studied spiders' natural immunological resistance to radiation. Subjecting himself to his own machine, Wyndham began to accelerate his own intellectual capacity, enabling him to make increasingly greater discoveries.

Wyndham's partnership with Drew began to fray when Drew's younger daughter Jessica was stricken with radiation poisoning due to prolonged exposure to uranium. Though both scientists pooled their skills to try to save her, the treatment required years of constant radiation-therapy during which time the young girl had to be placed in cryogenic suspension. When Drew's wife Merriem disappeared during her weekly trip to the village for supplies (Wyndham learned that she had been killed by a wolf-like beast but withheld that information from his friend), Drew became so despondent that he left Wundagore, with his daughter in Wyndham's custody.

Beginning to believe in the supernatural legends of the natives, Wyndham devised a suit of protective armor. He then began to procure and genetically accelerate both domestic and wild animals into "New Men," animals with humanoid posture and intelligence. Among the first of his New Men was Bova, a cow-woman, Porga, a pig-man, and Tagar, a tiger-man. With the assistance of the ghost of the Sixth Century magician Magnus, Wyndham trained the menagerie of New Men in the arts of chivalry and combat of the Sixth Century. Thus he founded the Order of the Knights of Wundagore to protect his realm from certain native sorcerous foes. Wyndham himself had assumed the title of Lord High Evolutionary. Decades later, the High Evolutionary converted his citadel into a spaceship and set forth with his knights for the stars, feeling that Earth was too confining for them. He left behind only three of his subjects, Jessica Drew (who had gained spider-like powers from her treatment), the girl's nanny Bova, and the evil cat-man Tabur (who later exterminated the mystically-born race of Cat People).

Eventually the High Evolutionary deposited the Knights on their own planet (called Wundagore II) and released them from his service. He then built himself a small moon-like satellite and embarked upon the most ambitious project of his life, the construction of a detailed replica of Earth. Creating the world out of debris from the asteroid belt, the Evolutionary positioned it in the stable "ghost LaGrange point" (between L7 and L8) in the Earth's

orbit, on the opposite side of the sun from the Earth. The High Evolutionary called the world Counter-Earth and for years watched over it as a god. Then, when he reposed in his ultimately-evolved state, Counter-Earth was towed out of its orbit by the Planet-Movers of Pegasus, an extraterrestrial company of cosmic contractors. Curious as to the nature of the beings who hired them, the Evolutionary accompanied the Pegasusians to the world of the Beyonders. He saw the crowning achievement of his life placed on display in a museum of curiosities and became numbed by the superiority of the Beyonders. Going mad, he attempted suicide, but the sophisticated circuitry of his armor had been designed to protect him from all bodily harm. He then returned to Earth, hoping to find something strong enough to destroy his armor and end his misery. The High Evolutionary found such a being in the Hulk, whom he cajoled into wrecking his armor. The Hulk succeeded in demolishing most but not all of the Evolutionary's armor, just enough so that the Evolutionary could devolve into a mass of one-celled organisms. But as long as the Evolutionary's armor contains the complete genetic information for its manufacture, the High Evolutionary's condition is reversible. It is only a matter of time before its microcircuits reorganize themselves and restore the High Evolutionary to his previous state.

Height: 6' 2"

Weight: 200 lbs (without armor)

Eyes: Brown

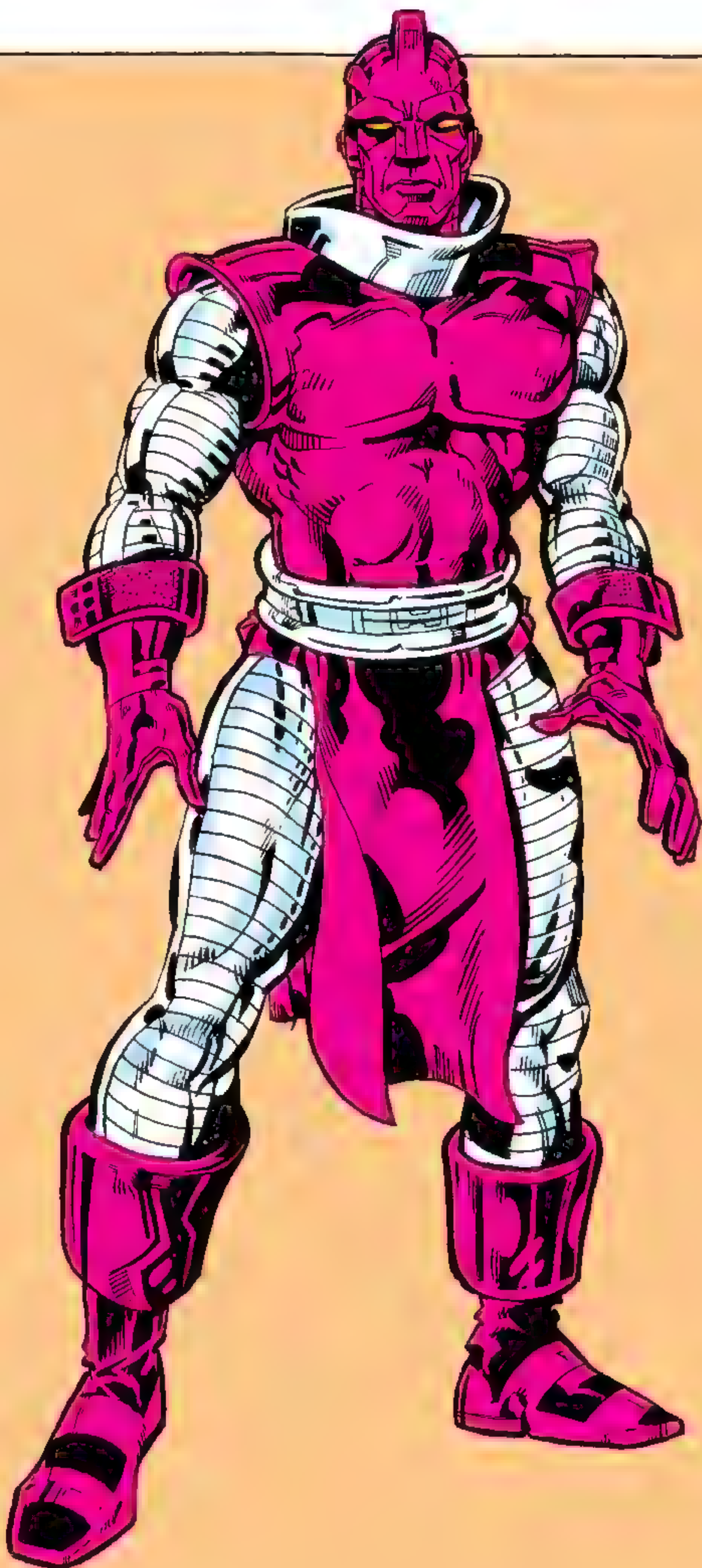
Hair: Brown

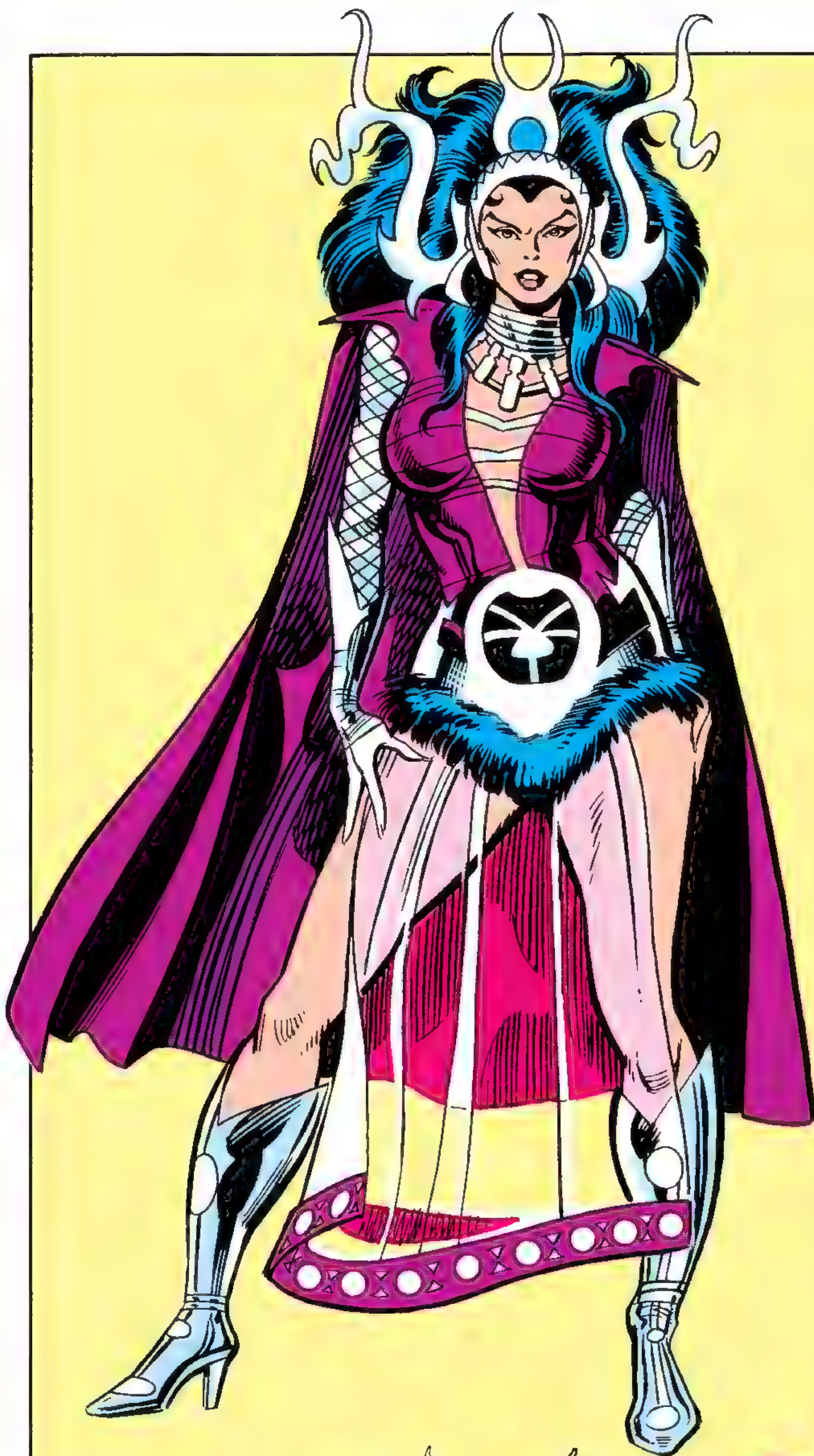
Powers: The High Evolutionary possesses no

superhuman physical powers, but has a highly evolved brain, capable of performing cognitive and intuitive feats more quickly than 99.9% of the population of the Earth. His vast knowledge of all of Earth's science makes him an expert in virtually every field of human endeavor. He is one of the most brilliant theoreticians on Earth.

Weapons: The High Evolutionary wears a suit of crystallized-hafnium armor, capable of protecting him from radiation, heat from -190° to 4,000° Fahrenheit, and physical injury, withstanding impacts of up to 2,500 pounds per square inch (the impact of a diesel railroad engine at 40 miles per hour). Integrated into the suit's cybernetically-controlled electronics is a body-wide genetic accelerator, which automatically activates whenever the Evolutionary is in greater physical danger than his armor can shield him from. The genetic accelerator is capable of speeding up his evolution to the peak of human attainment; a bodiless being of cohesive mental energy. In such form, the High Evolutionary cannot be harmed. Although he could reactivate the suit to restore him to corporeal existence at will, he generally becomes desireless in this ultimate form and chooses not to resume his human form. The internal circuitry is also capable of devolving him.

He can project the field of the genetic accelerator to affect organisms in the environment within a range of 100 feet.





KARNILLA

Real Name: Karnilla

Occupation: Sorceress, Queen of the Norns

Identity: Publicly known to citizens of Asgard

Legal status: Citizen of Nornheim

Other current aliases: Norn-Queen

Place of birth: Nornheim, dimension of Asgard

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: None

Base of operations: Nornheim, Asgard

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #107

Origin: The birth and early life of Karnilla are shrouded in mystery. All that is really known is that she hails from Nornheim, the Asgardian province where dwell the Three Norns (Urd, Skuld, and Verdani), the goddesses of destiny, and she grew to become one of the most accomplished practitioners of the arts of sorcery in all Asgard. Living opulently in a cavern beneath Nornheim's forbidding surface, Karnilla has few gods and goddesses among her subjects. She keeps only a few exiled dwarfs and enthralled barbarics (giants) as servants. Her relationship to the goddesses of destiny is unknown, although they clearly are beyond her jurisdiction. While most Asgardians view Karnilla as a figure of evil, she sees her deeds as just and necessary.

Height: 6' 6"

Weight: 475 lbs

Eyes: Purple

Hair: Black

Powers: Karnilla possesses the conventional attributes of an Asgardian woman ("goddess") as well as mastery of the mystical arts of Asgard. Like all Asgardians, she is extremely long-lived (though not immortal like the Olympians), superhumanly strong (the average Asgardian female can lift about 25 tons), immune to all disease, and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about 3 times denser than Earthly flesh and bone, accounting for Asgardians' greater strength and weight.) Her Asgardian metabolism gives her far greater than human endurance at all physical activities, though she seldom deigns to indulge in unnecessary exercise.

Karnilla's magical powers derive from two major sources: her innate capacity to manipulate magical energy honed through practice, and her acquired knowledge of spells and enchantments of Asgardian origin. Her ability to wield magical energy for personal use is only surpassed by Odin and a few others. Through sorcery, she is afforded a host of abilities: the enhancement of physical and sensory abilities, the assumption of different guises and attributes, and the deployment of mystical energy for offensive and defensive purposes, in the form of magic-bolts and shields.

Her vast knowledge of arcane lore enables her to cast spells with a variety of specific effects. The many spells she has created include illusion-casting, temporary paralysis or sleep, deflection of matter and energy, interdimensional teleportation, and elemental conversion. These spells derive their potency from the ambient mystical energy of Asgard's dimension or power-objects found therein. She is capable of casting spells interdimensionally, and certain spells (usually enhanced by a power-object) are capable of permanent effects. (She has, for example, cast a spell upon Oswald Garth, the human criminal who called himself the Wrecker, while physically in Asgard. The spell permanently enchanted Garth, giving both him and his weapon extraordinary properties. See *Wrecker*.)



LOKI

Real Name: Loki

Occupation: God of Mischief

Identity: Publicly known to citizens of Asgard. His existence is not known to the general public of Earth.

Legal status: Citizen of Asgard (often in exile)

Former aliases: As a shape-changer, Loki has impersonated a vast number of individuals and things.

Place of birth: Jotunheim, dimension of Asgard

Marital status: Married

Known relatives: Sigyn (wife), Laufey (father, deceased), Farbauti (mother), Odin (foster father), Frigga (foster mother), Thor (foster brother)

Group affiliation: None

Base of operations: Asgard

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85

Origin: Loki was the son of Laufey, king of the giants in the Asgardian kingdom of Jotunheim. At the beginning of the age, All-Father Odin declared war upon the race of giants and led the troops of Asgard against them. Laufey was slain in battle and the giants surrendered. Surveying the spoils of war, the Asgardians discovered a small god-sized baby hidden at the outskirts of the giants' main fortress. The baby was Loki, who had been shunned by his father because of his diminutive stature. Because Loki was the son of a king fallen in battle, Odin elected to adopt him and raise him as a son. As Loki grew to adulthood, his inborn propensity for mischief began to manifest itself. He soon earned the nickname, "God of Mischief." As his deeds grew increasingly malicious out of resentment for his noble half-brother Thor, he became known as the "God of Evil."

Height: 6' 4"

Weight: 525 lbs

Eyes: Green

Hair: Black-grey

Powers: Loki possesses the conventional attributes of an Asgardian, as well as certain innate magical powers. Like all Asgardians, Loki is extremely long-lived (though not immortal like the Olympians), superhumanly strong (Loki can lift about 30 tons, average for his race), immune to all diseases and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about 3 times denser than similar human tissue, contributing to the Asgardians' superhuman strength and weight.) His Asgardian metabolism gives him superhuman endurance in all physical activities.

Besides these physical abilities, Loki possesses a host of magical skills. Chief among these is his ability to transform his shape at will into those of other creatures. He has become such animals as a snake, eagle, mouse, and bee, gaining the basic natural abilities inherent in each form. While he can take on the likeness of another god, giant, or human, he will not necessarily gain the special physical or mental powers of the being he imitates. Loki can also transform external objects into other forms and substances by magic; for instance, he can turn clouds into dragons. He can also bring inanimate objects to life, or mystically imbue objects or beings with specific but temporary powers. He has, for example, augmented the might of such human criminals as the Cobra and Sandu. These magical effects remain only for as long as he maintains the spell that created them.

Loki can create certain rudimentary magical energy fields. With great concentration, Loki can create a field of sufficient resilience to repel Thor's enchanted hammer (though

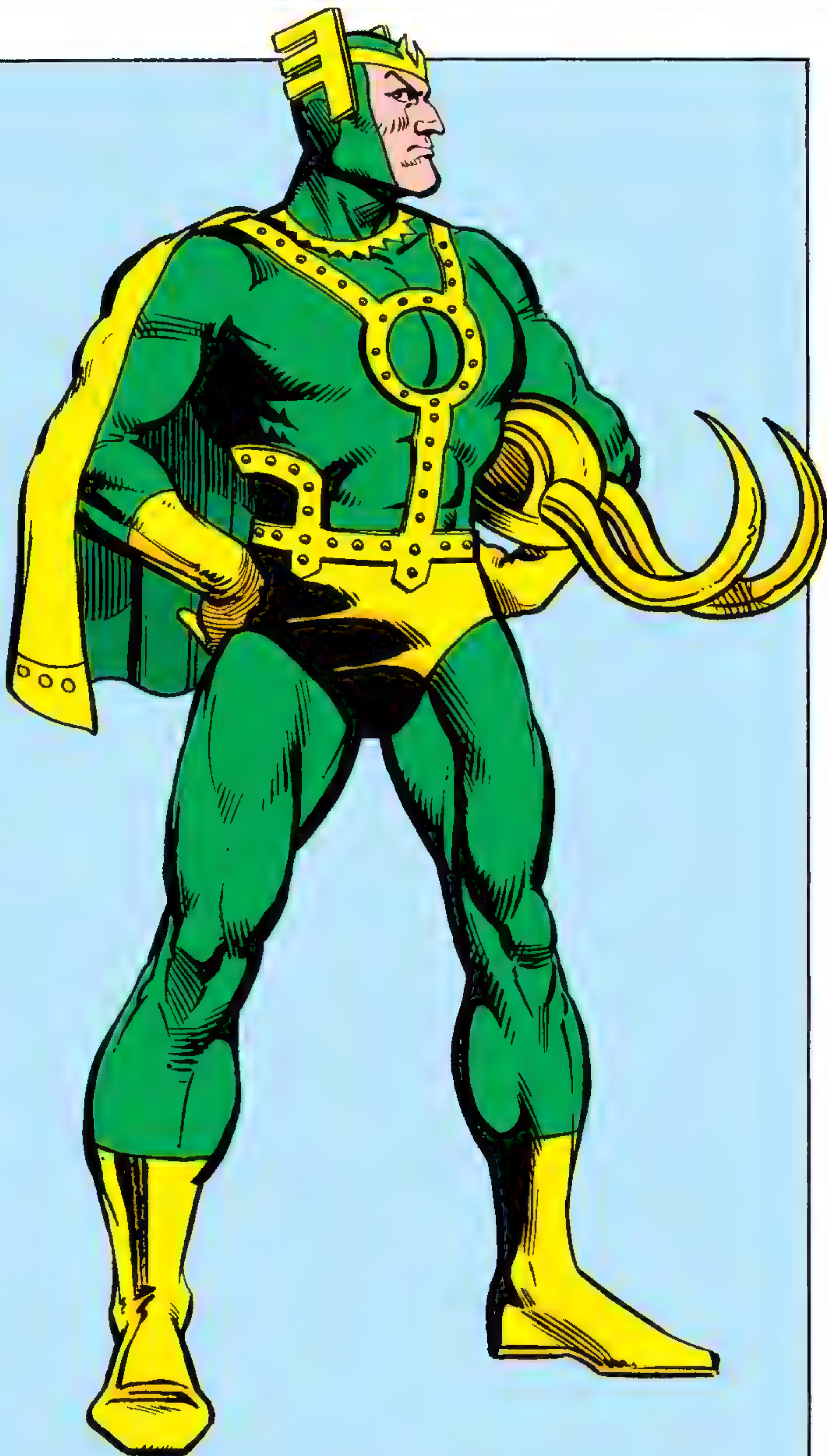
repeated blows would undoubtedly penetrate it) or physical objects such as large-caliber projectiles. He can also surround objects in mystical energy to levitate them. He once lifted and supported an entire building off the ground for several minutes. As with his influence over matter, his magical energy feats only last as long as he maintains them.

Loki also has a number of mental and extrasensory powers which are analogous to psionic abilities. He can broadcast his thoughts into other minds as well as plant compelling hypnotic suggestions. These telepathic abilities do not appear to be limited by distance: Loki can even cast his thoughts across dimensions. Loki cannot, however, perceive the thoughts of others. He does have certain extrasensory powers of perception, however, enabling him to see

and hear events in distant places simultaneous to their occurrence. He can also mentally project an image of himself, in a manner not unlike astral projection, through which he can communicate with beings in other places.

Loki can also magically create rifts between dimensions, allowing him or other objects passage from one universe to another. Most often this rift is between Asgard and Earth.

Weapons: Loki occasionally employs certain magical power-objects, such as the Norn Stones or rare Asgardian herbs, to augment his own magical powers. These objects or substances are generally used to enhance his immediate personal strength or abilities, or to create a permanent magical transformation, such as that which gave the Absorbing Man his power.



MERCURIO

Real Name: Name in own language is unknown ("Mercurio" is the nearest English equivalent.)

Occupation: Government psycho-explorer

Identity: Secret. His existence is not known to the general public of Earth.

Legal status: Citizen of Gramos

Former aliases: Karl Sarron

Marital status: Single

Group affiliation: None

First appearance: THOR #208

Origin: Mercurio was born on the planet Gramos, a world on the opposite side of the Milky Way galaxy from Earth which had been the home of a peaceful, technologically-advanced civilization until a freak space warp opened near the planet. As a consequence of this gravito-magnetic disturbance, only wavelengths at the extremes of the electromagnetic spectrum could pass through the atmosphere, depriving the Gramosians of ordinary life-sustaining light. In an attempt to seal the space warp, the High Lord of Gramos dispatched the world's top psycho-explorer, Mercurio, to Earth. Gramosian scientists had discovered a way to "beam" the mind of a subject into a host form on distant alien worlds for the purpose of exploration. Using this method, they sent Mercurio's mind into the body of wealthy landlord Karl Sarron on Earth. For months, Mercurio used Sarron's wealth to find the necessary materials to build the energy transformer that would steal Earth's electromagnetic field. In the course of his mission, Mercurio detected unusual energy emanations coming from a certain office in one of the buildings his host-body owned, the office rented by Dr. Donald Blake. He soon learned that the energy came from Blake's transformations into his true form, Thor. Learning from the High Lord that conditions on Gramos were critical, Mercurio decided to siphon some of Thor's transformational energies to bring his own true form to Earth so that he could employ his native powers to complete his mission with greater speed. Attempting the transformation, Mercurio was dismayed to learn that he could only partially bring his form to Earth. The left half of his body was a strange negative image of his true self, possessed of energies opposite to his native powers. Mercurio reasoned that he must siphon more of Thor's energies to complete his transformation. Engaging Thor in battle using both his natural and newfound powers, Mercurio was defeated when Thor covered him in molten iron, causing the opposing energies to converge in Mercurio's system to cancel out one another. Mercurio disappeared, apparently destroyed, but actually was dimensionally transported by Xorr the God-Jewel, the sentient crystallized remains of an ancient alien race possessing vast power. Mercurio's rescue being an accident, the jewel returned him to Gramos. Mercurio told his leader of the jewel's power and was sent with a small battalion to steal from Xorr the energies Gramos needed. Coincidentally, Mercurio encountered Thor while on his new mission. When Thor realized Xorr was malevolent, he and his Asgardian companions helped the Gramosians overpower Xorr so they could confiscate from it the elements they needed to save Gramos.

Height: 6'

Weight: 295 lbs

Eyes: White

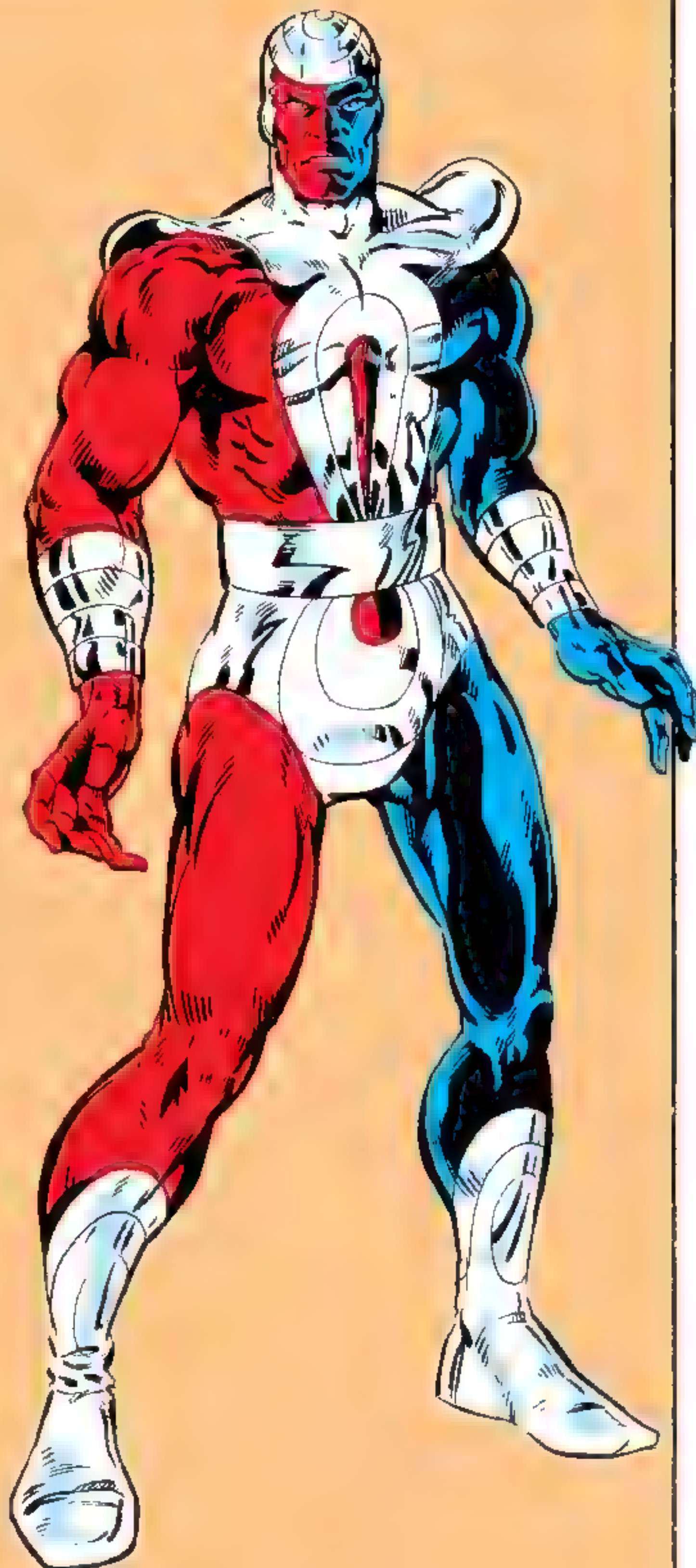
Hair: None

Unusual features: The right half of Mercurio's body is red, the left half blue-black. He has remained in this state even after his teleportation back to his homeworld.

Powers: Mercurio possesses numerous superhuman powers derived from his alien metabolism and the strange accident that made the right half of his body a negative image of his natural form. Mercurio is superhumanly strong, able to lift (press) approximately 10 tons. He is denser and far more durable than the average human being, able to resist great extremes in temperature, certain lethal radiations, and explosive forces up to the range of small anti-tank weaponry. He can fly by harnessing anti-gravitons (particles that repel gravitons, the smallest particles that contain a gravitational force) at a maximum speed of 40 miles per hour.

Mercurio possesses the ability to generate both heat and cold and direct it through his arms into the surrounding atmosphere. Certain Gramosians have learned to generate heat by using psionic energy to accelerate the motion of molecules. Due to Mercurio's unique nature, he can also generate cold by a similar psionically-controlled deceleration of molecules. Mercurio is able to control temperature within a range of 2,900° Fahrenheit (melting point of iron) to -440° F (19.67° above absolute zero).

Note: Neither Mercurio nor his race can survive in the vacuum of space unaided. They employ transparent life-support suits providing them with their atmospheric requirements for 6 hours before having to be replaced.



MR. HYDE

Real Name: Calvin Zabo

Occupation: Former medical research scientist, now professional criminal

Identity: Secret

Legal status: American citizen with criminal record in both identities

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: Trenton, New Jersey

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Former partner (now bitter enemy) of the Cobra, former partner of Batroc, the Jester, and the Scorpion

Base of operations: New York area

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #99

Origin: Calvin Zabo, a brilliant medical research scientist, had always been fascinated by the story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Believing it to be far more than a simple fictional account, Zabo devoted his life to discovering a chemically based formula which could totally unleash the best as well as the worst of his human nature. Realizing he would need vast sums of money for his project, Zabo augmented his pay as a medical researcher by systematically robbing his various employers. By moving from job to job, Zabo managed to stay well ahead of criminal prosecution. However, his unsavory reputation quickly spread through the medical community. Applying to the noted surgeon Dr. Donald Blake (also Thor), Zabo was incensed when he was refused employment based on his past misdeeds. Vowing vengeance on the same doctor, Zabo turned his full attention to his project. Months later, Zabo's years of painstaking research and experimentation paid off as he discovered the formula which transformed him into Mr. Hyde for the first time. Filled with a burning hatred of humanity, and believing himself to be the true personification of evil, Mr. Hyde chose Dr. Donald Blake as the first victim of his wrath. He has since become a nemesis of such New York area crimefighters as Daredevil, Spider-Man, and Captain America.

Height: 5' 11" (Zabo), 6' 5" (Hyde)

Eyes: Brown

Weight: 185 lbs (Zabo), 420 lbs (Hyde)

Hair: Grey (Zabo), Brown (Hyde)

Unusual features: The chemical process which transforms Calvin Zabo into Mr. Hyde is hormonal in nature. It causes the cells within his body to instantly manufacture mutated hormones which then trigger a physical transformation that encompasses his entire body. The complete process takes about 30 seconds. In some as yet unknown manner, over 200 pounds of bone and muscle tissue are added to Hyde's body. The transformation is extremely painful, and has several side effects. As his body transforms, Zabo's skin is stretched over his increasing volume. The resultant tissue distortion affects every one of his physical characteristics. Hyde and Zabo do not possess the same set of fingerprints, and Hyde's facial structure and musculature are distorted in such a way that he appears to be wearing a perpetual sneer. Zabo's personality is also affected by the transformation. He is filled with a savage anger and an almost beast-like ferocity. During battle, he can be consumed by hysterical passion and be unusually dangerous.

Powers: Mr. Hyde possesses superhuman strength. He can lift (press) over 11 tons. His body possesses exceptional recuperative powers and endurance. He is physically very tough, resistant to injury, and oblivious to extraordinary amounts of pain.

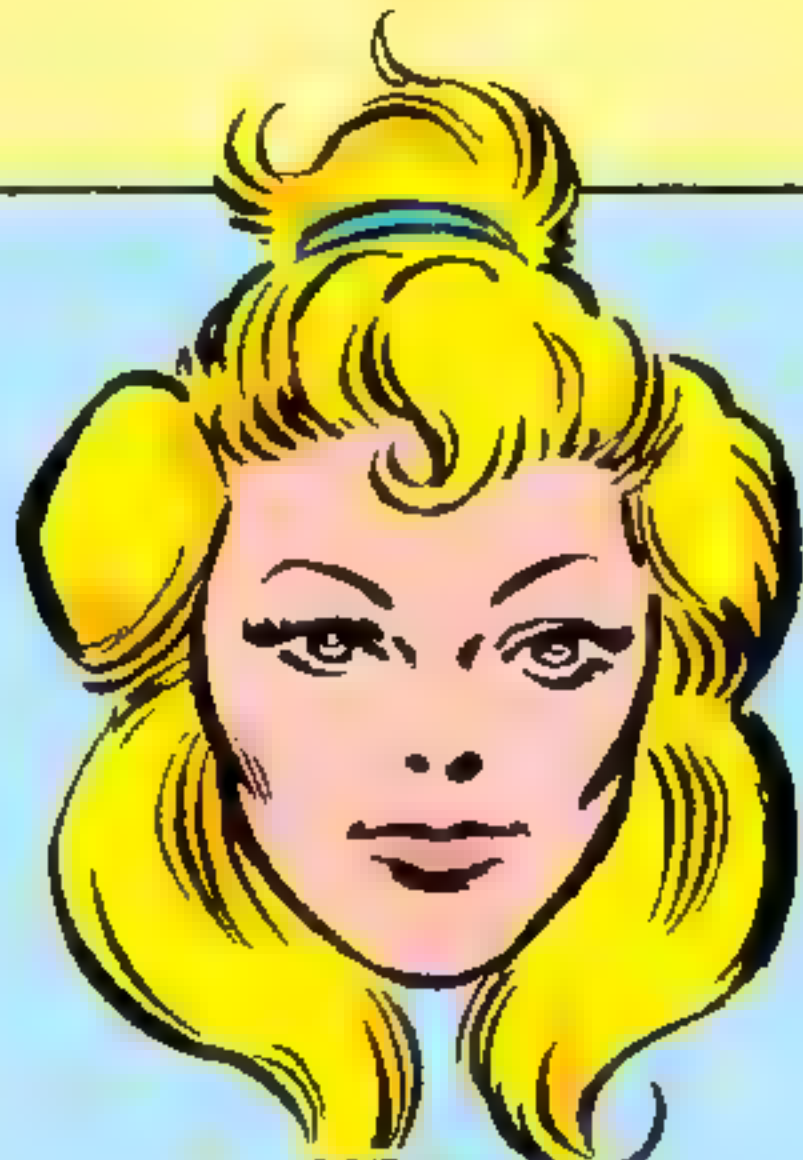


OLYMPIANS

The Gods of Olympus are a race of powerful human-like entities who possess godlike powers and were worshipped by the ancient Greeks and Romans from about 2,000 B.C. to 500 A.D. Their precise origin, like that of all races of Earth-gods, are lost in legend. There are numerous Olympian gods, but twelve of them comprise the Olympian Pantheon, the ruling court of the gods. The Olympians dwell in Olympus, another dimension adjacent to Earth, a portal to which is located somewhere on Mount Olympus in Greece. For the most part, the Olympians today have little to do with the inhabitants of Earth. The Olympian gods are known by both their Greek and Roman names.



ZEUS
(Roman name: Jupiter)
King of the Gods
First appeared in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #124



HERA
(Roman name: Juno)
Queen of the Gods
First appeared in THOR #129



PLUTO
(Greek name: Hades)
Lord of the Dead
First appeared in THOR #127



NEPTUNE
(Greek name: Poseidon)
Lord of the Sea
First appeared in TALES TO ASTONISH #70



ARES
(Roman name: Mars)
God of War
First appeared in THOR #129



APOLLO
(Greek name: Apollo)
God of Light
First appeared in THOR #301



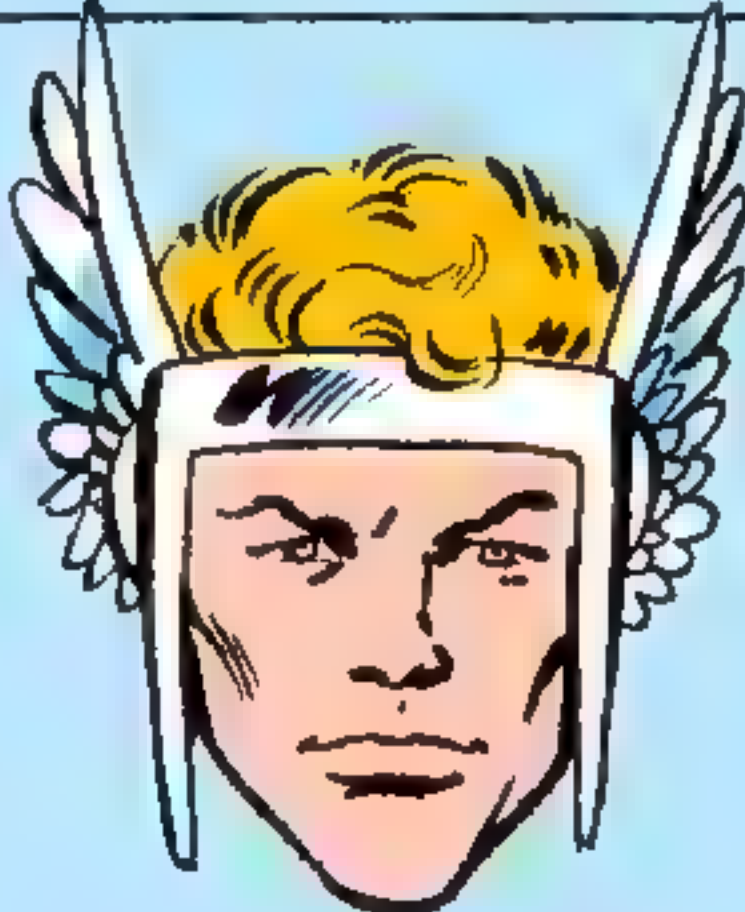
ARTEMIS
(Roman name: Diana)
Goddess of the Hunt
First appeared in THOR #129



ATHENA
(Roman name: Minerva)
Goddess of Wisdom
First appeared in THOR #164



VENUS
(Greek name: Aphrodite)
Goddess of Love
First appeared in SUB-MARINER #57



HERMES
(Roman name: Mercury)
God of Swiftness
First appeared in THOR #129

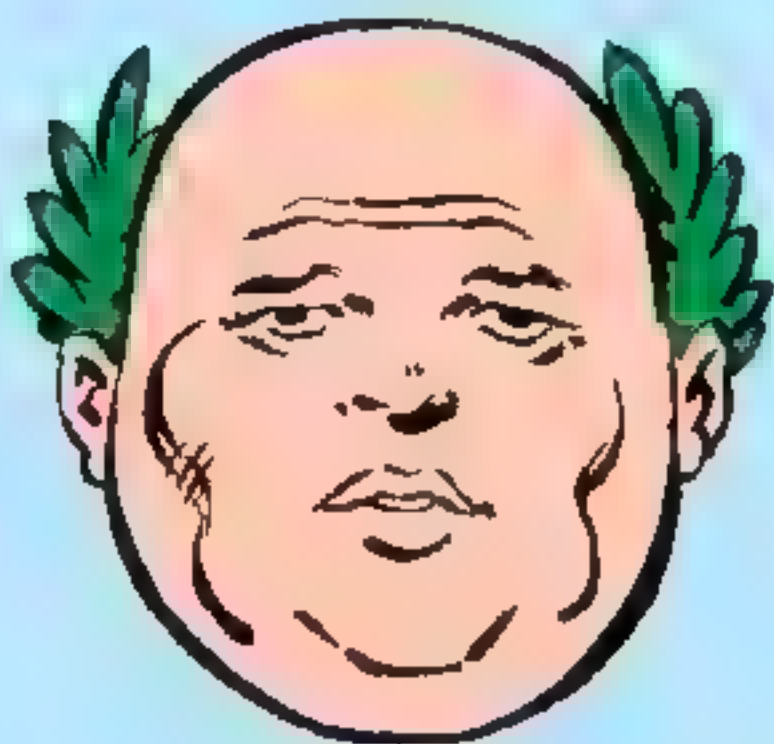


VESTA
(Greek name: Hestia)
Goddess of the Home
First appeared in THOR #301

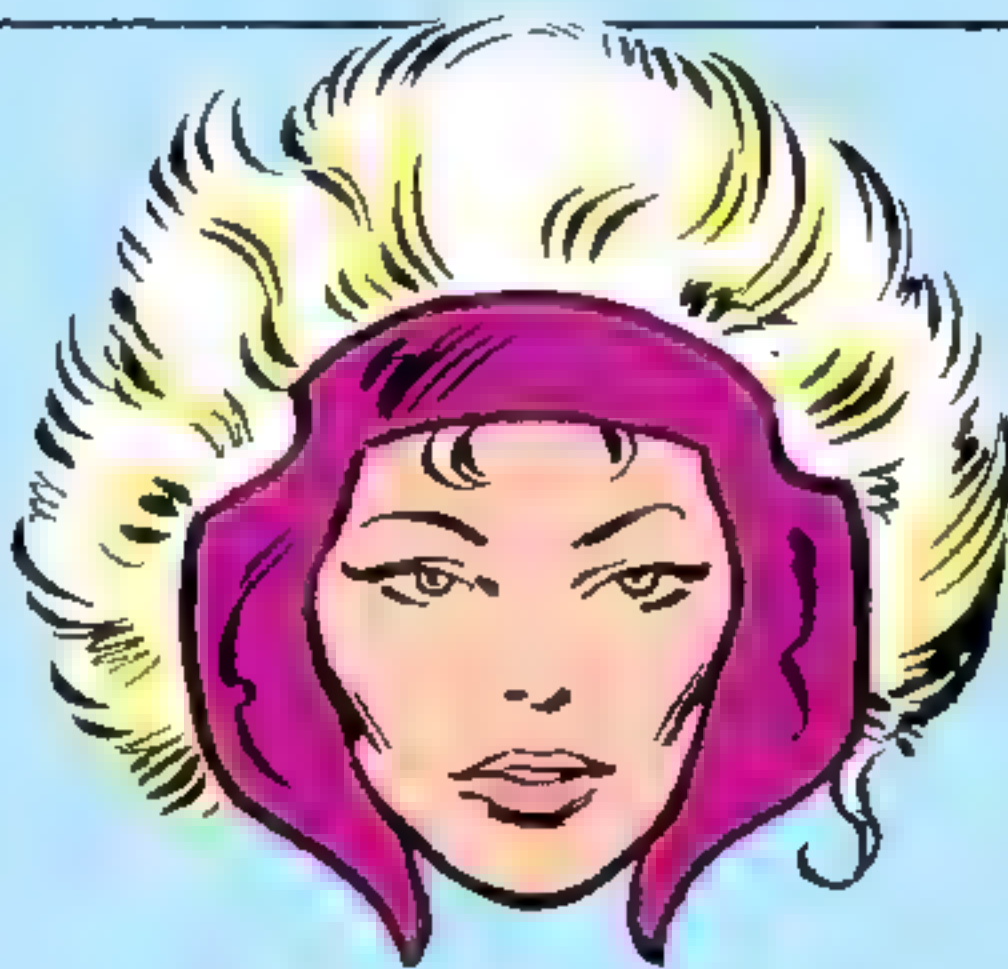


HEPHAESTUS
(Roman name: Vulcan)
God of Weaponmaking
First appeared in THOR #129

The following gods are not a part of the Pantheon, but are other prominent Olympians



DIONYSIUS
(Roman name: Bacchus)
God of Wine
First appeared in THOR #129



HYPPOLYTA
(Roman name: Hyppolyta)
Queen of the Amazons
First appeared in THOR #127



HERCULES
(Greek name: Heracles)
Prince of Power
First appeared in THOR ANNUAL #1

ODIN

Real Name: Odin

Occupation: Lord of Asgard

Identity: Publicly known to the citizens of Asgard, regarded by the citizens of Earth as mere myth

Legal status: Citizen of Asgard

Other current aliases: All-Father

Former aliases: Woden, Wotan, Atum-Re

Place of birth: Unknown

Marital status: Married

Known relatives: Frigga (wife), Thor (son), Loki (adopted son)

Group affiliation: Gods of Asgard

Base of operations: Dimension of Asgard

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #85

Origin: Odin was born ages ago as a member of the race of gods who would one day be called Asgardians. Although the precise circumstances of his birth are lost in antiquity, Odin is believed to be the son of Buri, one of the first great Asgardians, and Bestla, a frost giantess. Odin's parents produced two other sons as well, Vili and Ve. The three brothers eventually assumed leadership of the fledgling tribe of gods and helped them establish themselves in the dimension now known as Asgard. As ages passed and the gods rose and fell and rose again stronger than before, Odin gradually achieved ascendancy within the tribe. Finally at the twilight of the last age, it was Odin who mystically redistributed the Asgardians' life-forces into their current physical incarnations. Having done so, Odin was given the name All-Father, and has ruled Asgard as its absolute sovereign ever since. Though he took Frigga as his wife, Odin chose to mate with the non-Asgardian Earth-goddess Gaea (whom he knew as Jord) to produce a son who would have qualities beyond those of any Asgardian. This son was named Thor.

In recent years, Odin sacrificed his right eye to Mimir the All-Knowing Well of Wisdom in order to learn how to thwart Ragnarok, the cyclic cataclysm that brings a fiery end to the age. With the help of his son Thor, Odin managed to avert the natural coming of Ragnarok, perhaps indefinitely. Odin is attended by two mystical ravens, Hugin and Munin (whose names mean "Thought" and "Memory," respectively), who help him to survey the realm. Odin dwells in his royal palace at the center of Asgard's capital city, but also has a palace in Valhalla, overlooking the Land of the Honored Dead.

Height: 6' 9"

Weight: 650 lbs

Eyes: Blue

Hair: White

Powers: Odin possesses the conventional physical attributes of an Asgardian male ("god"), as well as the greatest single share of power in all Asgard. Like all Asgardians, he is extremely long-lived (though not immortal in the same sense as the Olympians), superhumanly strong (the average Asgardian male can lift about 30 tons; Odin can lift 60), is immune to all diseases, and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about 3 times as dense as similar human tissue, contributing to the Asgardians' superhuman strength and weight.) His Asgardian metabolism gives him far greater than human endurance at all physical activities.

Odin possesses vast energy powers of an unknown nature. Magical in their apparent form and function, these powers can be employed for numerous purposes, among which are: the augmentation of physical strength and endurance, the enchantment of beings or objects, and the projection of energy bolts. Odin's enchantments (such as the one he placed on Thor's hammer, Mjolnir, to return to the thrower's hand) last until he rescinds them or they are overpowered by a superior enchantment. Odin can also create interdimensional apertures with a gesture and project a 3-dimensional, audio-visual image of his vis-

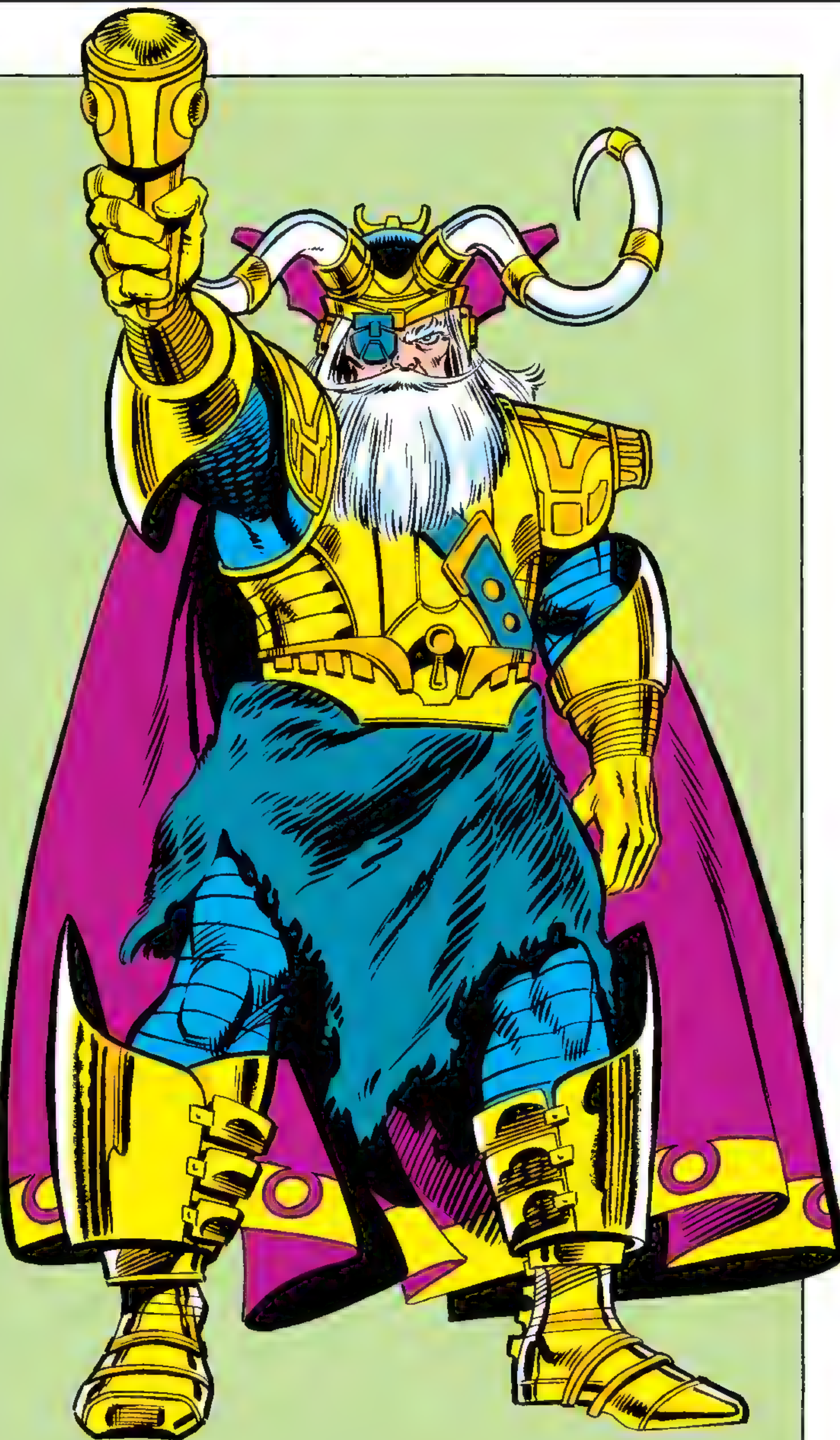
age, visible to only those he wishes, across space or dimensions. Odin commands the life energies of the entire race of Asgardians, and can absorb any or all of their life energies into his person at will, or in certain instances, restore life to an Asgardian whose life energies are ebbing. (He cannot resurrect the dead once they have passed into the dominion of Hela the Death Goddess.

At periodical intervals, approximately once every Earth year, Odin is required to sleep for about a week to renew his godly energies. If Odin misses the "Odinsleep," or is awakened before it is through, his power level begins to diminish. (Once while in such a state, his power diminished to the point that he could be drugged and kidnapped by aliens.) Odin's power is also dependent upon the dimension of Asgard itself. Unlike his son Thor, Odin's power wanes when he is on Earth or another dimension.

Odin is not omniscient, nor can he create life from nothingness, travel through time unaided, read thoughts, teleport (except interdimensionally), or move worlds. He is, however, perhaps the most powerful mythological god still active today.

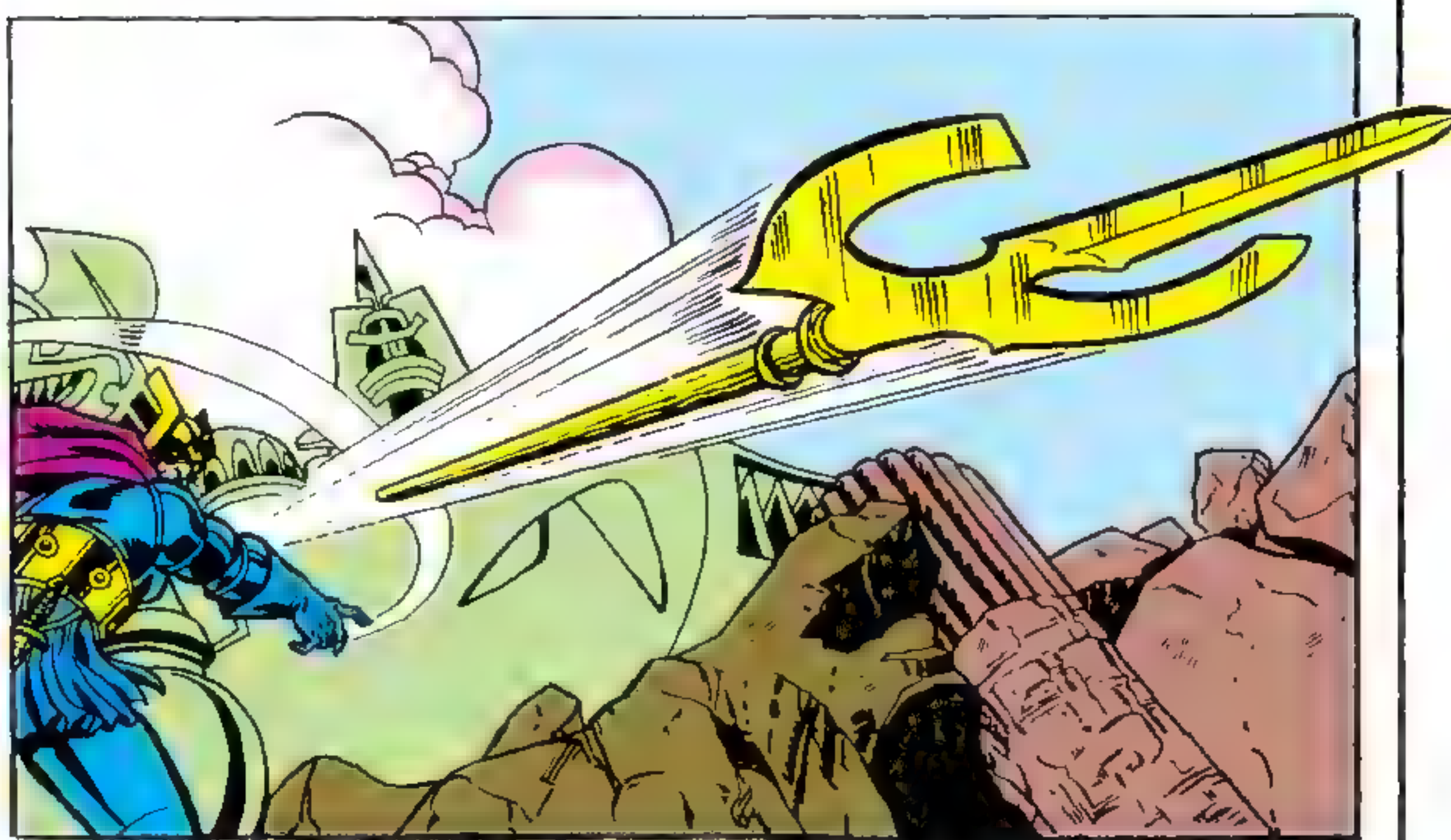
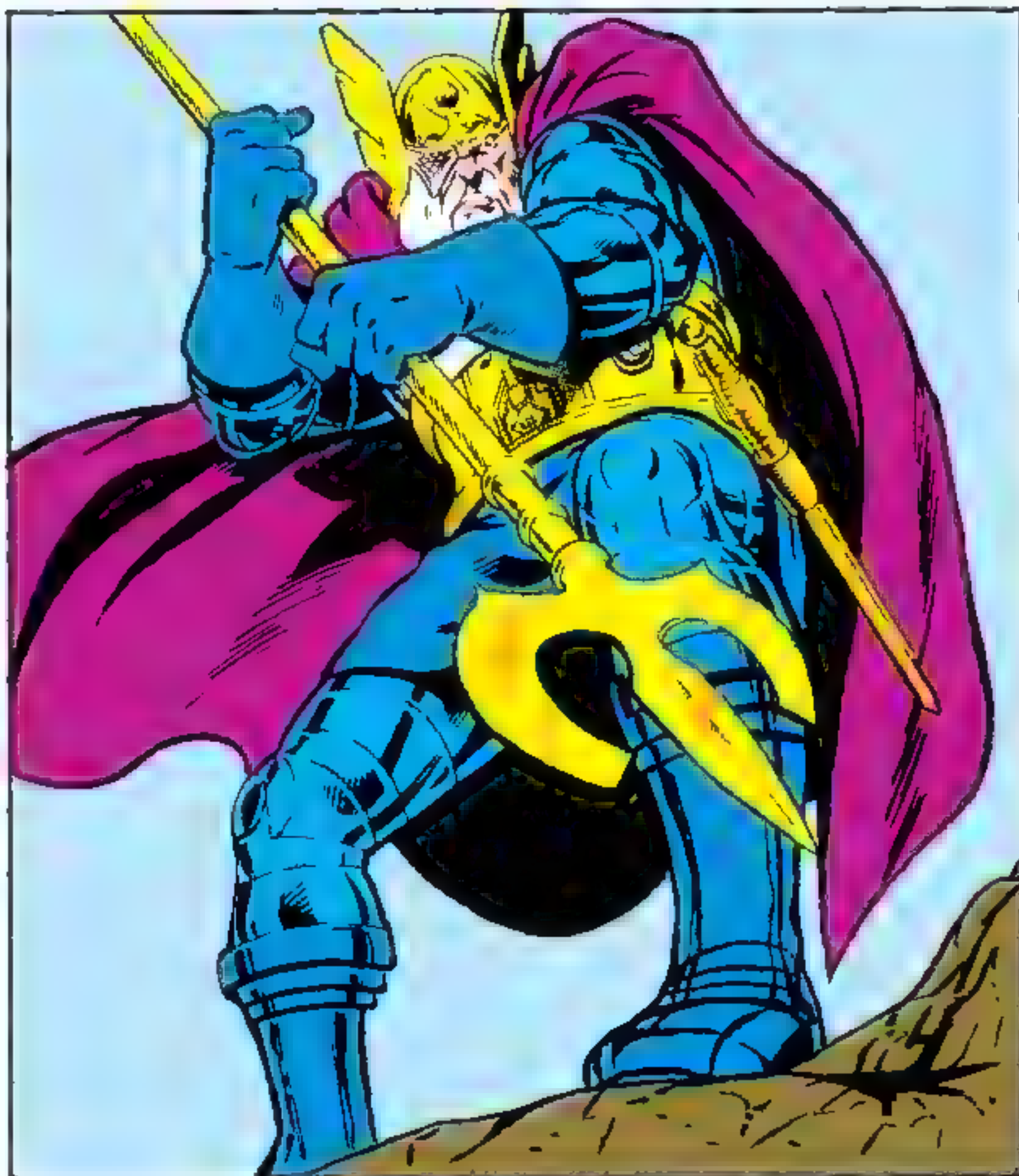
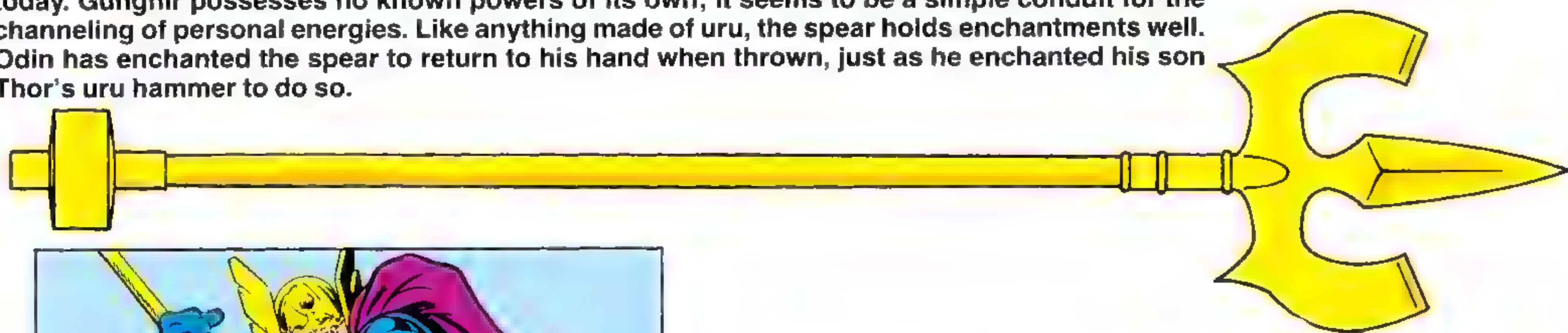
Weapons: Odin wields the trident Gungnir (the "spear of heaven") and the power scepter Thrudstok, a small mace. Both of these weapons are made of uru metal and are objects through which he can channel his power. He also wears Draupnir (the "Odinring") as a symbol of supremacy. The specific properties of the ring are yet unknown.

Transportation: Odin rides the eight-legged steed Sleipnir, who can fly through the air at incalculable speeds. He sometimes employs Skipbladnir, a Viking longboat whose enchanted sails and oars enable it to navigate the "sea of space." Skipbladnir can be mystically shrunk to the size of a fist.



ODIN'S SPEAR

Odin's spear Gungnir ("The Spear of Heaven") is an artifact made of a metal unique to the dimension of Asgard, uru. The three-pronged spear is of unknown origin, predating the current incarnation of Odin himself. At Odin's "birth" at the dawn of the current age of Asgardians, he found Gungnir on the Plains of Ida and used it to focus his power to fashion Asgard as it is known today. Gungnir possesses no known powers of its own; it seems to be a simple conduit for the channeling of personal energies. Like anything made of uru, the spear holds enchantments well. Odin has enchanted the spear to return to his hand when thrown, just as he enchanted his son Thor's uru hammer to do so.



Art by Eliot R. Brown



PLUTO

Real Name: Hades (his Greek name; "Pluto" is his Roman name).

Occupation: Ruler of Hades, the Olympian underworld (land of the dead)

Identity: Publicly known in ancient Greece and in the Roman Empire, but today believed to be a fictional character

Legal status: Citizen of Olympus and monarch of Hades

Other current aliases: Aidoneus, Dis

Former aliases: Hayden P. ("Mr. Pluto") Hellman, movie producer for Stardust Studios

Place of birth: Olympus

Marital status: Married

Known relatives: Persephone (wife); Gaea (grandmother); Kronos (father); Rhea (mother); Zeus, Neptune (brothers); Hera, Demeter, Vesta (sisters); Apollo, Ares, Dionysius, Hephaestus, Hercules, Hermes (nephews); Artemis, Athena, Venus (nieces)

Group affiliation: Gods of Olympus

Base of operations: Hades, the Olympian underworld, which Pluto named after himself. For ages, Pluto snatched the astral forms of certain worshippers of the Olympian gods immediately prior to their deaths, preserved them by magic, and had the god Hermes escort them to Hades through one of the many nexuses between the Earth dimension and the Olympian underworld.

First modern appearance: THOR #127

Origin: Pluto is the eldest son of the Titan Kronos, who ruled the Olympian dimension before Zeus, and his Titaness wife Rhea. (Kronos the Titan is not to be confused with Chronos the Eternal.) Fearing that he would be overthrown by one of his offspring just as he himself had dethroned his own father, Kronos imprisoned each of his children in Hades as soon as he or she was born. (Later legends erroneously claimed that Kronos had actually swallowed his children and that they remained alive inside him until Zeus released them.) Appalled, the children's mother, Rhea, gave birth to Zeus without Kronos's knowledge, and gave him to the primeval Earth goddess Gaea to be raised in secret. The adult Zeus freed his siblings and led them in successful revolt against Kronos and the Titans. (See Zeus.) Pluto's unique contribution in the war was stealing Kronos's principal weapons from his palace while wearing a helmet of invisibility (see Weapons).

After the Olympians' victory, Zeus, knowing that the male Titans now confined in Hades needed a stern warden, and that the brooding Pluto was the only one of his siblings who found life in Tartarus suitable to his or her own temperament, assigned rulership of the entire underworld to his elder brother. Pluto was quite pleased with this new role and rarely left the underworld over the following centuries. The most infamous exception was when he carried off Kore, the goddess of spring, to the underworld where he forced her to become his wife under the name Persephone. Kore's mother, the fertility goddess Demeter, was outraged and refused to allow crops to grow in ancient Greece until Kore was returned. Eventually a compromise was reached, and Persephone spends only the fall and winter months in Hades with her husband.

Since the time of his initial appointment to Hades, Pluto had populated his realm with the "shades" (astral forms) of mortals. When the worship of the Olympian gods eventually died out, Zeus forbade Pluto from collecting any more "souls" and forced him to relinquish those souls he had collected over the years. Pluto obeyed the edict resentfully. Accustomed to a kingdom full of subjects, he soon convinced himself that Zeus had assigned him rulership of Hades as a form of exile, and that Zeus had proven himself an incompetent leader by allowing the worship of the Olympians to come to an end. Zeus, noting Pluto's

increasingly ominous rebelliousness at council meetings of the Olympian pantheon, warned Pluto against attempting to overthrow him and sentenced him to remain monarch of Hades unless he could find a willing replacement. Eventually Pluto deceived Zeus's son Hercules into signing an agreement to become his successor. Pluto soon released Hercules from the agreement since he found himself unable to leave the kingdom he so loved. Although Pluto decided not to forsake Hades entirely, he still wished to add new conquests to his kingdom. As a result Pluto has attempted to conquer Earth, using mutants from an alternate future as his soldiers, has tried unsuccessfully to set in motion the groundwork for overthrowing Zeus and conquering Olympus, and has even attempted to capture Odin. None of Pluto's schemes of conquest have succeeded, but he is not deterred.

Height: 6' 5"

Weight: 520 lbs.

Eyes: Gray, but usually invisible

Hair: Black

Powers: Pluto is one of the most powerful of the Olympian gods. Among them, his physical strength is matched only by Neptune and Ares, and exceeded only by Zeus and Hercules. Pluto can lift (press) 70 tons. Like all Olympians, he is immortal, possessing a life essence that cannot be snuffed by any conventional means and a body with supernatural recuperative powers. It would take an injury of such magnitude that it dispersed a major portion of his bodily molecules to cause him phys-

ical death, and even then, his life essence may still be unharmed. (It is not yet known what manner of force can kill an immortal's life essence.)

Pluto's energy-wielding abilities are equalled among the Olympians only by Neptune and surpassed only by Zeus. Only a few of Pluto's many powers have as yet been depicted. He has been portrayed as able to fire powerful force bolts from his hands, to create mystical flame and to sheathe himself with such flame while remaining unharmed, and to be able to create interdimensional apertures to enable him to transport himself from one dimension to another.

Weapons: Pluto has a helmet of invisibility made for him by the Cyclopes, one-eyed giants (after whom the X-Man Cyclops was named) who had been trapped by Kronos in Hades along with Pluto. Using it, Pluto is able to make himself magically invisible even to other Olympians.

Pluto wields a large battleaxe through which he can project, focus, and magnify his force bolts (although he is fully capable of using the bolts without it). The battleaxe is made of enchanted adamantite (see Hercules) and is virtually indestructible. One of these axes was smashed by the spell of the Norns in recent years but Pluto has others. All of them were constructed by the Cyclopes, who still live in Hades, although not as prisoners.



RADIOACTIVE MAN

Real Name: Dr. Chen Lu

Occupation: Former nuclear physicist, now professional criminal

Identity: Secret

Legal status: Expatriate citizen of the People's Republic of China, with an international criminal record

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: Lanzhou, People's Republic of China

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Former member of the original and second Masters of Evil, former member of the Titanic Three, current member of the third Masters of Evil

Base of operations: Mobile

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #93

Origin: Dr. Chen Lu was a respected nuclear physicist for the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China. When the Thunder God Thor foiled a Chinese military incursion into India, the Chinese government, which at that time was hostile to the West, called upon its scientists and military strategists for a way to defeat Thor, who seemed to be the capitalist world's champion. Chen Lu had already been experimenting for several years with a way of harnessing nuclear radioactivity to induce superhuman powers in human beings. Chen Lu volunteered to become China's human weapon against the West, concealing his own aspirations of world conquest.

Having already spent months immunizing himself to the harmful effects of radiation, Chen Lu exposed himself to massive doses of specific-particle radiation. After impressing his superiors with a demonstration of the new powers he had developed, Chen Lu, calling himself the Radioactive Man, traveled to New York City to challenge Thor. Upon his defeat, he managed to escape deportation back to China, and went into hiding until Baron Heinrich Zemo located him and enlisted him in the Masters of Evil. This criminal group, and its later incarnation organized by Ultron, met defeat at the hands of the Avengers. Years later, Chen relocated to Southeast Asia, where he briefly teamed with the third Crimson Dynamo and the Titanium Man as the Titanic Three, champions of Eastern Communism. This group eventually encountered the Avengers, and met defeat. Living in disgrace for some time, the Radioactive Man was contacted by Elihas Starr (alias Egghead) and agreed to join yet another incarnation of the Masters of Evil. When Dr. Henry Pym defeated the group, the Radioactive Man was taken into custody by the U.S. government for deportation.

Height: 6' 6"

Weight: 310 lbs

Eyes: Brown

Hair: None

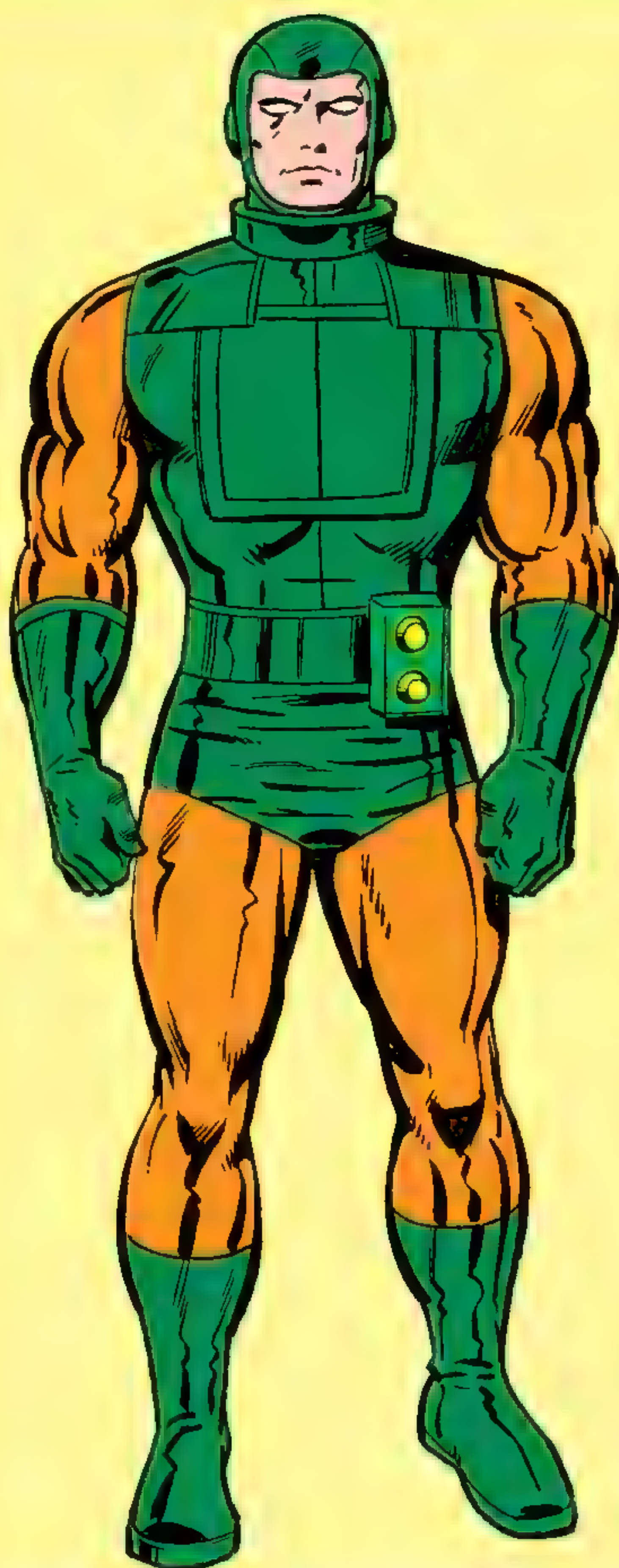
Unusual features: The Radioactive Man's skin is an iridescent green.

Powers: The Radioactive Man possesses the ability to manipulate and project radioactive particles given off by his body's atomic decay. His body, atomically restructured by the experiment which gave him his powers, functions like a living nuclear reactor. He can build up a vast store of nuclear power which he can control at will. He can emit radiation in the form of heat or as "hard" radiation. He can emit beams of radioactive energy, as well as channel his body's radiation into a force field sufficiently strong to repel Thor's hammer. He can also channel his body's energy into superhuman strength, making the Radioactive Man capable of lifting (pressing) about 2 tons.



The effects of the Radioactive Man's powers upon his opponents vary from mild radiation poisoning (nausea, dizziness) to complete incineration. By releasing a major fraction of his body's latent radioactive decay energies as infra-red radiation, he can incinerate an entire city block within several minutes. He can dampen his power down to a safe level, but he has a residual "leaking"

radiation (about a dose of 50 millirads per hour; the average person's dose of ionizing radiation in America is 150 millirads per year). Much of this is checked by a body harness of his own design, which was modified by Zemo. The null-radiation harness allows him to remain in the presence of ordinary, unshielded people indefinitely.



RECORDER

A Recorder is a humanoid-shaped android built by the Rigellian Colonizers (see *Alien Races: Rigellians*) for the purpose of information gathering and analysis. Each of the approximately 500 identical Recorder units were constructed on the manufacturing satellite orbiting Rigel-3, and were built of some extraterrestrial ferrous alloy. Their information gathering instrumentation is located in their head components, and is analogous to eye and ear placement on humanoid beings. The eyes of the Recorder takes in data across the whole electromagnetic spectrum (radio to gamma rays), not simply the visual portion of the spectrum. The ears can register sounds from .3 to 150 deciBel. The sampling rate for average events is every .01 second; for relatively more interesting events it is every .001 second. The computer data-processing system fills the entire chest cavity and has 40 terabytes (trillions of bytes) of information storage capacity. Recorder units are equipped with vocoders permitting them to communicate verbally, and are able to understand and speak over 11,000 languages spoken throughout the Milky Way galaxy and others explored by the Rigellians..

Recorders are generally sent on exploratory missions to planets the Rigellians have under consideration for colonization. Their usual procedure is to land on a planet, record information about its atmosphere, habitat, gravity, inhabitants (if any) and so on. When the job is finished (it generally takes about one Earth-week to complete the survey of an Earth-sized planet), the Recorder reports back to the Rigellian command center and disgorge its information for analysis. After its databanks are fully processed, it is bulk erased of all information irrelevant to its next mission.

Among the most famous Recorder units are #211, who was assigned to accompany the Asgardian Thunder God Thor in his mission to Ego, the Living Planet. Recorder #211 performed so well, gathering such unprecedented amount of rare data, that the Rigellian Grand Commissioner permitted it to retain its artificial memories of its experiences upon the discharging of data rather than having it undergo the customary erasing procedure. It was later to record other exploits of Thor and one exploit of Adam Warlock. Another distinguished Recorder was #417, who accompanied the Olympian Hercules on his journeys in the Andromeda Galaxy in an alternate future corresponding to the early 22nd Century on Earth.

First appearance: (Recorder #211) THOR #132, (Recorder #417) HERCULES #1.

SCARLET SCARAB

Real Name: Mehemet Faoul

Occupation: Archaeologist

Identity: Secret

Legal status: Citizen of Egypt with no criminal record

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: Aswân, Egypt

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: Abdul Faoul (father, deceased)

Group affiliation: None

Base of operations: Egypt

First appearance: I: INVADERS #23, II: THOR #326

Origin: Mehemet Faoul was the son of Dr. Abdul Faoul, a famous archaeologist who unearthed the ruby scarab, a mystical power-object, from its tomb and used it to become a champion of Egypt during World War II. The elder Abdul, working as a liaison between the Allied Forces and the Egyptian government, led the original Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner to a recently excavated pyramid where he supervised their inspection of the tomb's interior. Although the two believed they were helping to search for the secret hiding place of the fanatical nationalist group, the Sons of the Scarab, they were actually being tricked into opening the vault where the ruby was kept. When the elder Faoul seized the fist-sized artifact, he revealed himself to the Torch and Sub-Mariner as the leader of the Sons of the Scarab. Granted superhuman powers by the ruby, Faoul called himself the Scarlet Scarab and used his abilities to oust first the British, and then the Nazis, from his homeland. Following the war, the Scarab battled criminals until one day in the 1950's, the ruby disappeared from the strongbox in which he kept it.

The ruby scarab, an artifact of the powerful pre-dynastic Egyptian sorcerer named Garret, was originally created to battle the Elementals, four humanoid extra-dimensional sorcerers who attempted to subjugate Egypt around 3500 B.C. After vanquishing the Elementals, Garret, knowing he was soon to die, enchanted the mystical talisman to return to its resting place in his tomb whenever it had exhausted its store of mystical power. When the Scarlet Scarab used its power to near depletion, it disappeared. Dr. Abdul Faoul, unaware of its enchantment, spent the next twenty years of his life fruitlessly searching Egypt for the ruby, never thinking to look in the place where he originally recovered it. Some decades later, the Elementals dispatched N'Kantu (see the *Living Mummy*) to fetch the ruby from its tomb in order to use it to free them from the dimension in which its power had imprisoned them. The ruby passed into the possession of a number of people including Prof. Ahmet Abdol (see the *Living Monolith*), a thief named Daniel "The Asp" Aspen, the Elementals, and the extradimensional traveler named Hecate. After a concentrated period of extensive use, the ruby disappeared once more into its tomb.

Unaware of the ruby's activities ever since losing it, Dr. Abdul Faoul searched for it up until the eve of his death. As his dying act, he gave his son Mehemet, whom he had trained as an archaeologist, the strongbox where he had kept the ruby. Inside it was the costume of the Scarlet Scarab, a journal of his exploits, and a photograph of the lost ruby. Feeling duty-bound to continue in his father's footsteps, Mehemet set out to find the ruby. For years he searched, finally coming to its original resting place. With the ruby scarab in hand, Faoul gained the powers that his father had possessed, designed a new uniform, and set out to become Egypt's new champion, the Scarlet Scarab. Among his foremost goals was the protection of the priceless artifacts of ancient Egypt. In one of his missions to recover some stolen artifacts, he encountered and held his ground in combat with Thor.

Height: 6' 1"

Weight: 230 lbs

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Black

Powers: The Scarlet Scarab possesses various superhuman powers granted him by contact with the mystical ruby scarab. He can employ the ruby to

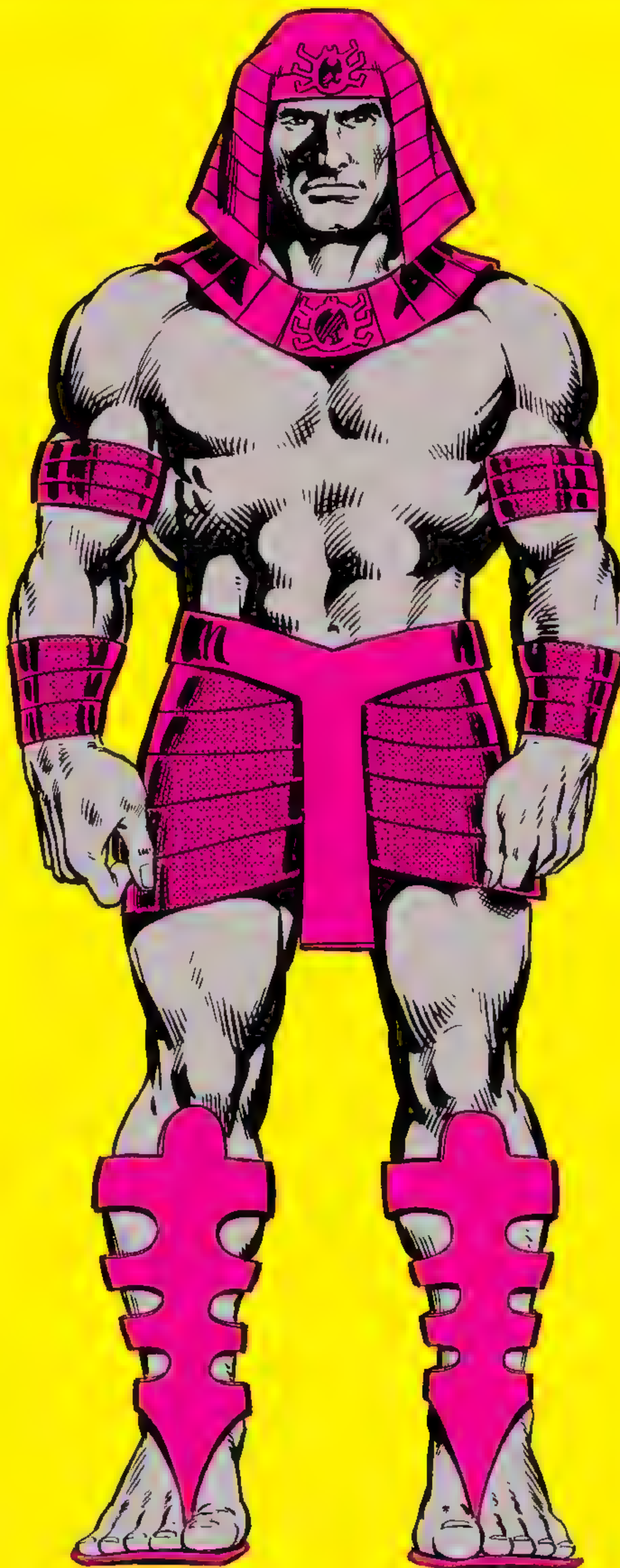
enhance his physical strength, enabling him to lift (press) about 60 tons. The scarab also provides him with a certain degree of mystical immunity to physical harm. By enveloping himself in a nimbus of mystical energy, he can protect himself from physical harm up to the concussion of a small anti-tank missile. He can also project this mystical energy, the precise nature of which is unknown, as bolts of force. These bolts have a maximum concussive force of 300 pounds per square inch, sufficient force to overturn a diesel locomotive. The Scarlet Scarab can also project the mystical energy earthward, enabling him to counteract the pull of gravity and fly. He can travel at any speed at which he is still able to breathe (due to his augmented musculature, a maximum of 370 miles per hour). It is not yet known the amount of mystical energy the Scarlet Scarab can employ before temporarily depleting his ruby

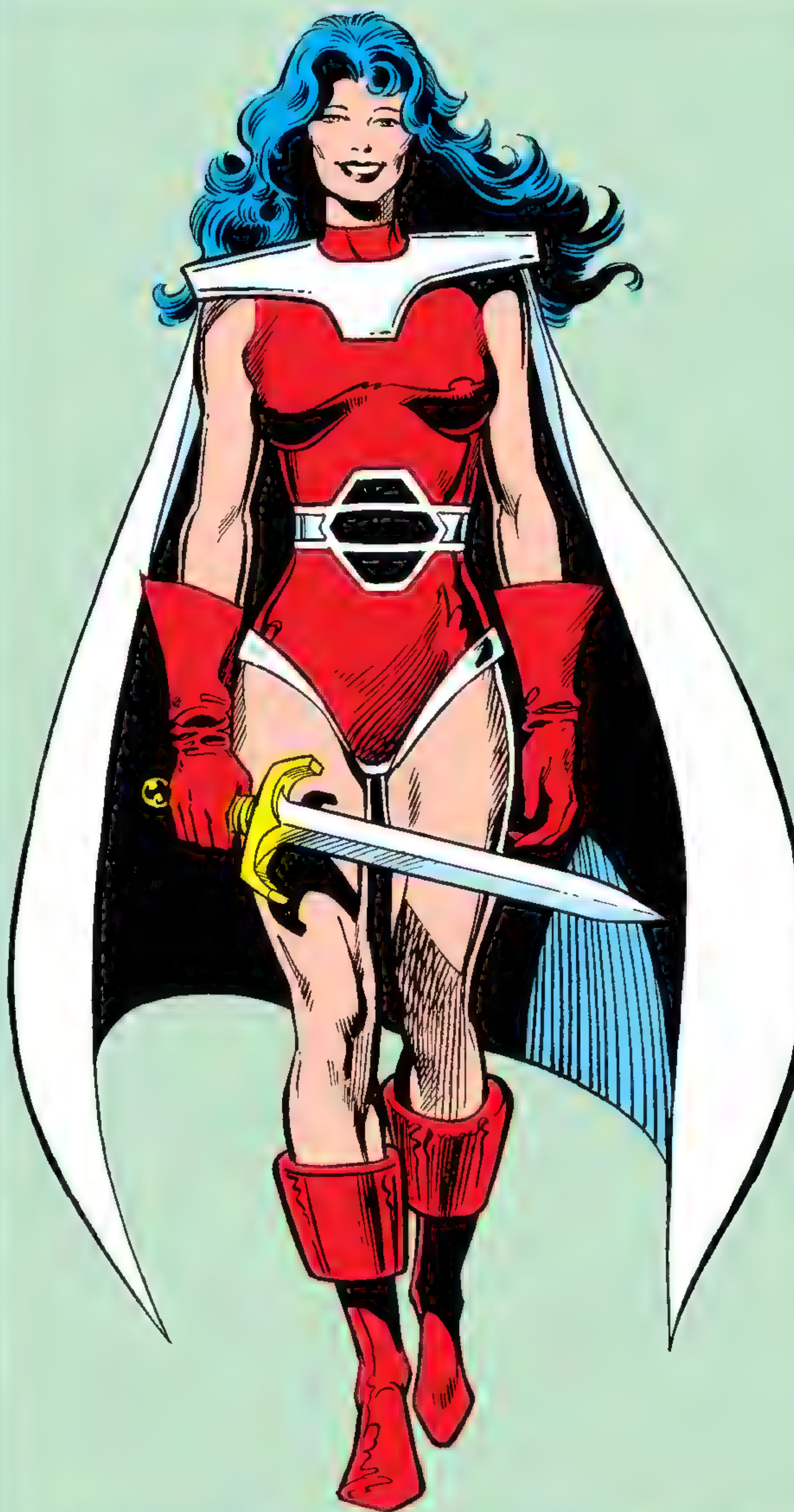
power-object.

The ruby scarab also enables him to sap the strength of any person whom he touches. This strength-draining occurs at a rate partially determined by the Scarab and partially by the nature and extent of the strength of his opponent. It is not yet known whether the Scarab can drain energy from a human being to the point of his or her death.

The Scarlet Scarab's major weakness lies in his dependency on his mystical talisman. Separated from it by force, he reverts to his normal human levels of ability.

Weapons: The ruby scarab is a 5-inch long stylized figurine of a scarab beetle constructed to be a receptacle of mystic energies. Employed by superhuman users, it can be used for even greater mystical feats than those accomplished by humans like the Scarlet Scarab and his predecessor.





SIF

Real Name: Sif

Occupation: Warrior, shield maiden

Identity: Publicly known. Her godhood is not acknowledged by the general public of Earth.

Legal status: Citizen of Asgard

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: Asgard

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: Heimdall (brother)

Group affiliation: Gods of Asgard

Base of operations: Asgard

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #102

Origin: Sif was born a second generation goddess of Asgard, her parentage unrevealed. As a child, she had golden hair and was an occasional playmate of Thor and his half-brother Loki. Once, while she was still an adolescent, Loki decided to play a trick on her in retaliation for her preference of Thor's company over his. As she slept, Loki cut off all of her golden hair. When she discovered the misdeed, Sif alarmed the entire capital city of Asgard with her cries of dismay. Loki, knowing he would be blamed for the trick, hurried to the kingdom of the Trolls to bargain with them to forge some artificial hair of pure gold to give Sif as recompense. The Trolls agreed to his terms and set about making the hair, secretly preparing it in the event that Loki tried to renege on his side of the bargain. Loki indeed stole the hair without paying for it, and presented it to Sif. Placed on her head, the gold hair began to grow as if it were natural, shinier than before. However, because the Trolls did not have a chance to treat it with a special potion before Loki stole it, the hair began to darken, finally becoming ebony black. When Sif began to cry once more, her parents began to tire of her vanity and so sent her off to learn the arts of warfare as a Shield Maiden. When she returned to Asgard years later, accomplished in the ways of the warrior, she had grown to accept her black tresses.

Odin, lord of Asgard, had long deemed Sif to be a fitting mate for his son Thor, heir to the throne. Thor and Sif had seen little of one another in the millennia since their childhood when Odin deemed it time for them to renew their acquaintance. Thor had just been involved in a relatively brief relationship with a mortal, Jane Foster, and Odin was anxious to make him forget it. Soon after meeting Sif again, Thor's interest in her turned to passion, and the two became lovers and companions. Eventually, they pledged to marry. However, Thor's attachment for Earth frequently came between them. Sif much preferred the world of the gods to the mundane world of mortals, and after attempting to adjust to Earth life on more than one occasion, returned to Asgard to live without Thor. Although Thor and Sif have not broken their betrothal, their marriage has been postponed until such time as they can reconcile their differences.

Height: 6' 2"

Weight: 425 lbs

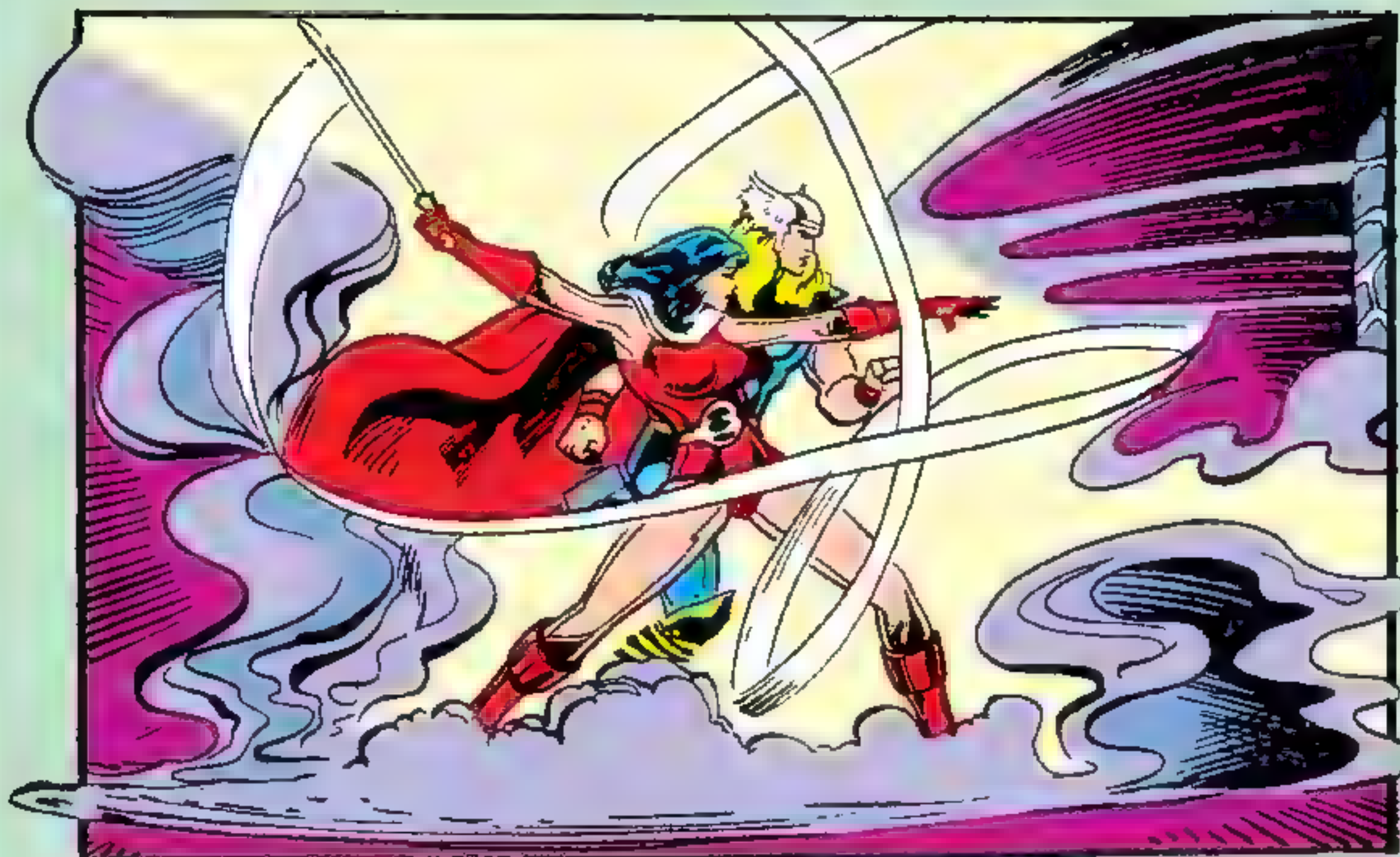
Eyes: Blue

Hair: Black

Powers: Sif possesses the conventional attributes of an Asgardian woman ("goddess"). Like all Asgardians, she is extremely long-lived (although not immortal like the Olympians), superhumanly strong (the average Asgardian female can lift about 25 tons; Sif can lift 30 tons) immune to all diseases, and resistant to conventional injury. (Asgardian flesh and bone is about 3 times as dense as similar human tissue, contributing to all Asgardians' superhuman strength and weight.) Sif's Asgardian metabolism gives her far greater than human endurance during all physical activities.

Sif has extensive training in unarmed combat as well as swordsmanship. Her natural fighting ability is only surpassed among Asgardian women by Brunhilda the Valkyrie.

Weapons: Sif wields a special sword enchanted by Odin to enable her to "cleave" passageways between dimensions (primarily Asgard and Earth) by a special pattern of swinging motions.



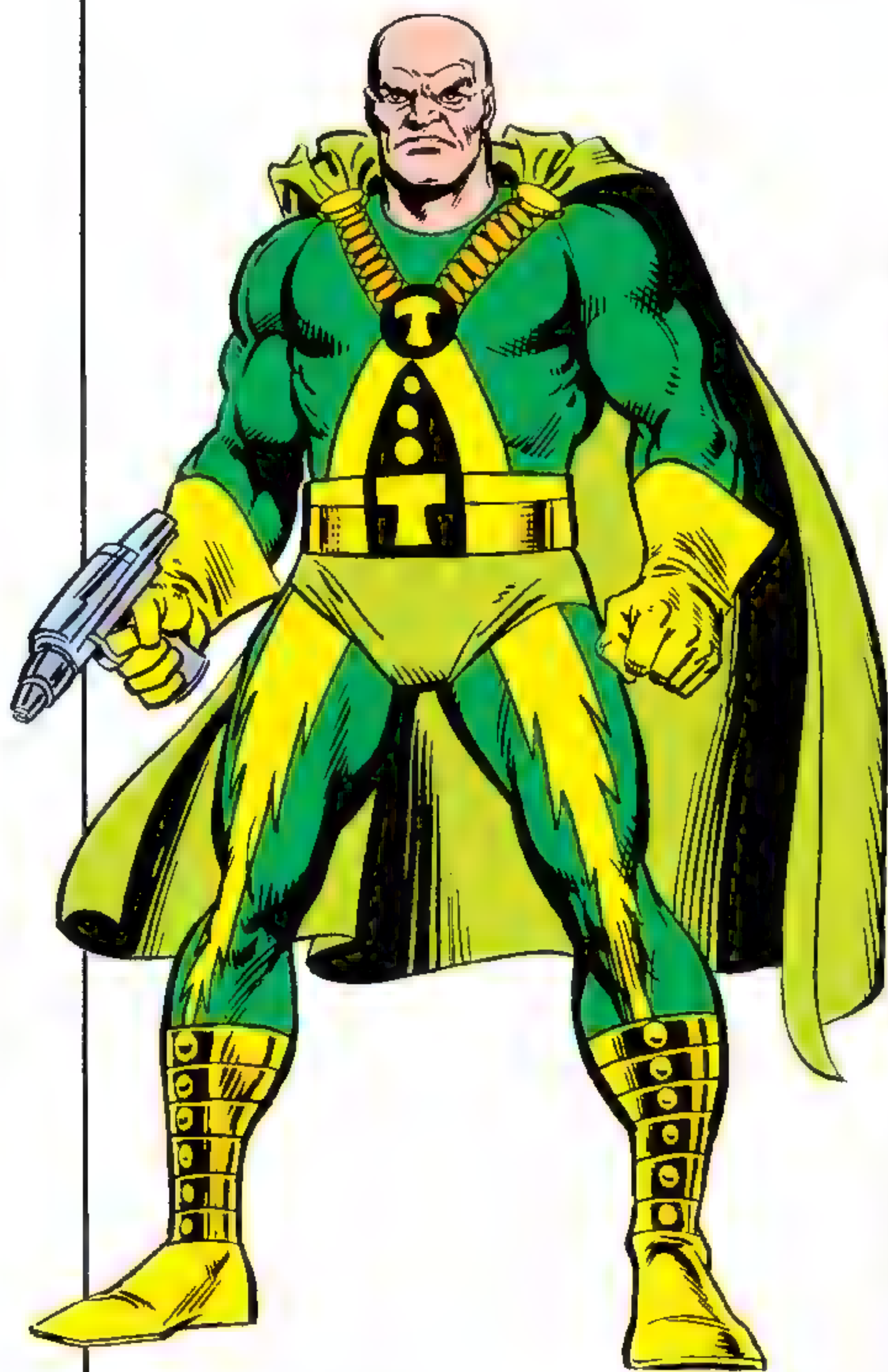


SURTUR

Surtur is an enormous fiery demon native to the dimension of Asgard. Possessed of evil intelligence and vast power, Surtur is one of the major elemental forces of evil that the gods of Asgard fear. Surtur is a mystical being whose existence predates that of the current incarnation of Odin, Lord of Asgard, himself. Over a thousand feet tall, wielding a huge fiery sword, Surtur was once imprisoned by Odin at the Earth's core. Surtur is the being who cleanses Asgard with fire after all the gods have fallen in battle at Ragnarok, the periodic destruction of Asgard. Along with Ymir the Frost Giant and the Midgard Serpent, Surtur is the most powerful of Asgard's native enemies.

In recent years, Surtur has been freed from imprisonment twice. The first time the Asgardian god of mischief Loki set Surtur free to wreak havoc on Earth. The second time Surtur was set free by Marduk of the Sons of Satannish, a cult of human demon-worshippers. Surtur was banished to some unnamed netherworld at the end of that encounter, and has not been seen since. His current whereabouts are unknown.

First appearance:
JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #97



TOMORROW MAN

Real Name: Artur Zarrko

Identity: Publicly known

Former aliases: None

Marital status: Single

Group affiliation: None

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #86

Origin: Artur Zarrko was a citizen of an alternate future Earth of the 23rd Century (not the same one as that of Thundra; see *Thundra*), an era of international peace. Entertaining ambitions of world conquest, Zarrko was frustrated by the unavailability of weapons since the disarmament program of a century before. No information on the construction or design of weaponry had survived. Zarrko therefore used his scientific genius to construct a time machine and planned to travel back to a century when weapons had existed, steal some, and bring them back to his own century where he could use them to achieve world domination. Choosing the 20th Century because that was when weaponry had achieved their greatest sophistication and proliferation, Zarrko stole a United States Army cobalt bomb under the alias of the Tomorrow Man. The Asgardian thunder god Thor intervened, and in an act of desperation, the Tomorrow Man tried to set off the cobalt device. Thor prevented the detonation and returned the now-amnesiac Zarrko to the authorities of his own century, who gave him a new identity and employment as a clerk.

Thor's evil stepbrother Loki later restored Zarrko's memory in order to use him in a plot against Thor. Zarrko rebuilt his time machine and, accompanied by a giant mining robot, traveled to the 20th Century and coerced Thor to return with him to his home era to assist him in his plans for world domination. Zarrko met defeat when the Master Machine, a computer which ran the government of the 23rd Century Earth, acted in its own defense, and encased Zarrko in a ball of energy.

Eventually extricating himself, the Tomorrow Man was next seen in the 20th Century engaged in battle with Kang the Conqueror, whose mastery of time travel was greater than his own. Meeting defeat, Zarrko eventually decided to journey into the future rather than the past, and found an alternate future of the 50th Century suited to his temperament. Establishing himself as dictator, he lived in contentment until an extratemporal menace forced him to seek Thor's aid. The menace vanquished, he has returned to his home in the 50th Century.

Height: 5' 11"

Weight: 240 lbs

Eyes: Blue

Hair: None

Powers: The Tomorrow Man possesses no superhuman powers, but has a natural genius-level scientific intellect.

Paraphernalia: The Tomorrow Man has built a cube-shaped time machine, whose design and power source are not yet known. The Tomorrow Man employs a modified mining robot called the Servitor, in which has been placed certain offensive weaponry.



ULIK

Real Name: Ulik

Occupation: Warrior

Identity: Unknown to the general population of Earth

Legal status: Citizen of the Domain of Trolls

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: Domain of Trolls, Gundershelm Caverns, Asgard

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Trolls of Asgard

Base of operations: Asgard

First appearance: THOR #137

Origin: Ulik is a member of the Rock Trolls. Over a millennium old, Ulik is the strongest and fiercest of all the Trolls. Virtually nothing is known of his ancestry, his early life, or how he got to be so much more powerful than his kinsmen. Ulik first met Thor, mightiest warrior of neighboring Asgard, several years ago when he attempted to steal Thor's hammer for the Rock Trolls. Although he gave Thor a hard-fought battle, the thunder god ultimately triumphed. Ulik faced Thor on a subsequent occasion, again coming close

to overpowering Thor, but not succeeding. Ulik later led the trolls through an interdimensional tunnel to Earth in an invasion attempt which was repelled by Thor. His failure, coupled with his attempt to usurp the rule of the troll kingdom, led the King of the Trolls, Geirrodur, to consign him to stoking the subterranean furnaces that heat the trolls' kingdom.

Dissatisfied, Ulik eventually escaped and wandered deeper beneath Asgard's surface, finally discovering a lost tribe of trolls unknown to Geirrodur. Ulik disposed of their leader and led this tribe through the interdimensional portal to Earth to again attempt to invade it. Once again Thor fought in Earth's defense, vanquished the invaders, and sealed up their portal with molten rock. Ulik's current whereabouts and activities are unknown.

Height: 6' 8"

Weight: 780 lbs

Unusual features: All Asgardian trolls are apelike in build, and possess leathery skin and tufts of fur on their heads and bodies.

Powers: Ulik possesses the natural attributes

of his race, the Rock Trolls, but to a superlative degree. Whereas the average troll can lift (press) about 25 tons, Ulik's strength matches Thor's, enabling him to lift (press) about 95 tons. The average troll has 2.5 times the endurance of a human being; Ulik has 6. Ulik's body is sufficiently strong to resist a direct blow by Thor's hammer without serious injury. Like all trolls, Ulik's vision extends into the infra-red range, enabling him to see in the relative darkness of underground caverns. Ulik is immune to all terrestrial diseases, and his recuperative powers are many times that of a human being.

Weapons: Ulik often wields a pair of metal pounders, forged of an unknown alloy, worn on each hand like brass knuckles. Ulik has used these pounders to enhance the strength of his blows, and can clap them together to produce massive shock waves equivalent to about 6.5 to 8 on the Richter scale (depending on the local geological fault features).

More recently, Ulik has made use of a sword and a mace provided by the forges of the Rock Trolls.



WRECKER

Real Name: Dirk Garthwaite

Occupation: Professional criminal

Identity: Publicly known

Legal status: American citizen with criminal record

Former aliases: None

Place of birth: New York City

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: None

Group affiliation: Leader of the Wrecking Crew

Base of operations: New York area

First appearance: THOR #148

Origin: Dirk Garthwaite was a manual laborer employed by a demolitions company who was fired for his antisocial behavior and fits of violence. Deciding to turn his talent for mayhem and destruction into criminal activity, Garthwaite fashioned himself a simple costume to hide his identity. He then committed a series of crimes under the name of the Wrecker, his trademark being the crowbar with which he devastated the scene of the crime. While fleeing from the authorities, the Wrecker happened upon a hotel room occupied by Loki, the Asgardian god of evil, whose magical powers had at that time been temporarily removed by Odin. The Wrecker smashed his way in while Loki was in the midst of mystically summoning Karnilla, Queen of the Norns (see *Karnilla*). The Wrecker overpowered Loki and while trying on Loki's horned helmet was mistaken for the god when Karnilla hastily materialized to grant Loki magical power so that he could battle Thor. Now possessed of magical power which gave him superhuman strength, the Wrecker embarked upon a brazen wrecking spree, no longer fearing the authorities. This spree attracted the attention of Loki's half-brother Thor, the thunder god, whose power had also been diminished at the time by his father Odin's spell.

The Wrecker battled Thor for hours straight, finally besting the partially-depowered god. (It took the invincible Destroyer automaton, animated by the spirit of the goddess Sif, to defeat the Wrecker.) The Wrecker was imprisoned under heavy sedation in an upstate New York hospital for several months, but developed an immunity to the tranquilizers and broke free. In a return bout with Thor, who now possessed his full godly might, the Wrecker was overpowered. Thrown upon the electrified third rail of the New York subway system, the Wrecker had his superhuman strength drained from him by a discharge of energy from Thor's hammer. Imprisoned for a few years, the Wrecker eventually escaped along with three fellow inmates, and managed to locate the crowbar in which he believed his enchanted power had fled after being driven from his body. The four convicts gripped the iron crowbar in the midst of an electrical storm, and were struck by lightning. The lightning magically distributed the enchanted strength bestowed by the Norn Queen upon the four of them. Acquiring costumes and taking individual aliases, the four called themselves the Wrecking Crew. Since the formation of this group, the Wrecker has seldom acted independently.

Height: 6'3"

Weight: 320 lbs.

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Brown

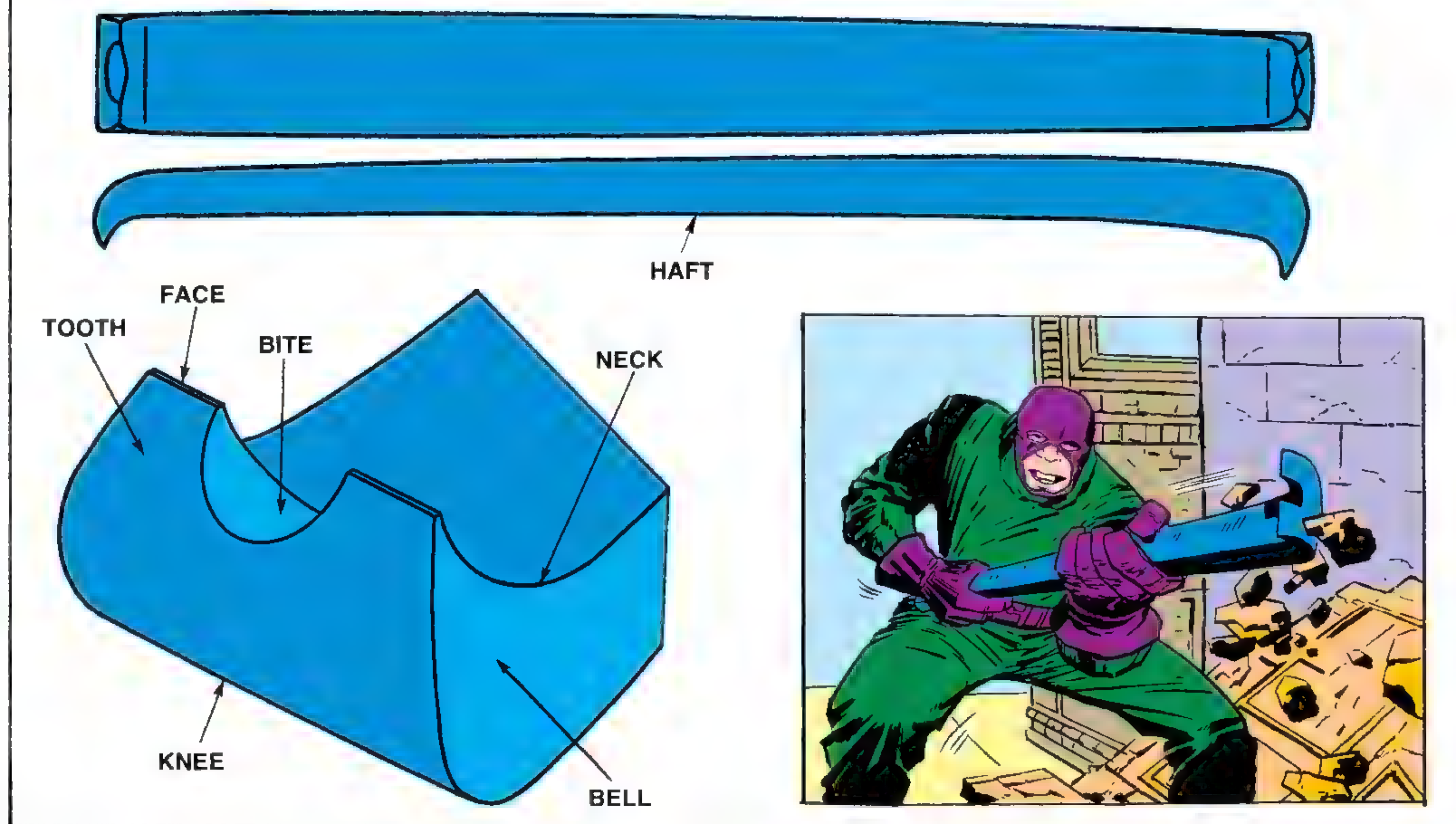
Powers: The Wrecker possesses superhuman strength and a high degree of imperviousness to harm. By Karnilla's original enchantment, the Wrecker could lift (press) about 40 tons. Since sharing his power with his cronies in the Wrecking Crew, the Wrecker is now able to lift about 10 tons. The enchantment augmented his entire body, strengthening his bone, muscle, and flesh. The Wrecker is capable of withstanding the impact of a .45 caliber bullet without it penetrating his skin. On the Mohs scale of hardness (diamond = 10, human flesh = 1), the Wrecker's skin is 5.5.

Weapons: The Wrecker wields a 4-foot long cast iron crowbar which has become virtually indestructible through extensive contact with the Wrecker's enchanted skin. The Wrecker uses it offensively as both a throwing weapon and a bat. Using the crowbar, the Wrecker can demolish a steel and concrete wall in a matter of seconds.



WRECKER'S CROWBAR

The Wrecker's crowbar is an ordinary demolition hand-tool enchanted by the Asgardian magic of Karnilla the Norn Queen (see *Karnilla*) to be as indestructible as metal native to Asgard. Wielded by Dirk Garthwaite, the Wrecker, whose physical strength was also augmented to Asgardian levels by Karnilla, the crowbar becomes a weapon of vast destructive potential. The Wrecker has used the crowbar to demolish whole buildings in minutes and to hold off the thunder god Thor in battle. Residual magic in the crowbar enchanted the bodies and weapons of Garthwaite's partners, the Wrecking Crew (see *Wrecker, Wrecking Crew*).



Art by Eliot R. Brown



YMIR

Ymir is the oldest and most powerful of the Frost Giants, a race of enormous humanoid creatures several hundred feet tall, and covered with snow and ice, and native to the dimension of Asgard. The Frost Giants origin is lost in antiquity; however, they are known to predate the gods of Asgard themselves. Few in number due to the heavy losses sustained over the millennia in battle with the gods, the Frost Giants dwell in the frozen land of Niffleheim north of the country of Asgard proper. Their huge size, durability, and raw power make them the gods' most formidable foes.

Ymir is very old, but age has not diminished his power in the least. Although intelligent and capable of speech, Ymir is not particularly cunning or subtly motivated. His vast physical power has enabled him to survive and maintain his rule over his kinsmen over the millennia. Ymir possesses the mystic abil-

ity to command ice and snow. Whatever he touches freezes, including the air, if he so chooses. If the ice that apparently makes up his entire body shatters, Ymir can even cause the fragments of his form to reassemble.

Ymir had once been imprisoned by Odin at the beginning of the age within a volcano. It is not known how long he remained there. He was once magically conjured to appear on Earth by the human cult of demon-worshippers called the Sons of Satannish. Ymir and Asgard's other great enemy Surtur the fire-demon were dispatched from Earth when the sorcerer Doctor Strange tricked them into pitting their might against one another. Ymir was banished to some extradimensional netherworld. His current activities and whereabouts are unknown.

First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #97.



ZEUS

Real Name: Zeus

Occupation: Supreme monarch of Olympus

Identity: Publicly known but generally believed to be a fictional character

Legal status: Citizen of Olympus

Former aliases: Jupiter, Jove (names given him in ancient Rome)

Place of birth: Mount Lycaeum, Arcadia, in what is now Greece

Marital status: Married

Known relatives: Ouranos (grandfather, deceased), Gaea (grandmother), Kronus (Saturn, father), Rhea (mother), Hera (wife sister), Neptune (Poseidon, brother), Pluto (brother), Demeter (sister), Hestia (sister), Apollo (son by Leto), Ares (son by Hera), Artemis (daughter by Leto), Athena (daughter by Metis), Dionysius (son by Semele), Hebe (daughter by Hera), Helen of Troy (daughter by Leda, deceased), Hephaestus (son by Hera), Hercules (son by Alcmena), Hermes (son by Maia), Venus (Aphrodite, daughter by Dione)

Group affiliation: Gods of Olympus

Base of operations: Olympus

First appearance: THOR ANNUAL #1

Origin: Zeus is the son of the Titans Kronus and Rhea, who were the children of the sky god Ouranos and the elder goddess Gaea ("Mother Earth"). Kronus rose to power in the dimension adjacent to Earth (which came to be called Olympus) when he fatally wounded his father Ouranos. The dying Ouranos prophesied that Kronus would likewise be overthrown by one of his own children. As a result, upon the birth of each of Kronus's children, Kronus had the infant imprisoned in Tartarus, the most dismal section of the Olympian underworld now known as Hades. Appalled, the children's mother, Rhea, concealed her sixth pregnancy from him and secretly gave birth to Zeus on Mount Lycaeum in Arcadia, an area of the land now known as Greece. Rhea gave the infant Zeus to the safekeeping of Gaea, who hid the baby in the cave of Dicte on Aegean Hill on the isle of Crete, where he was tended by various minor goddesses. Zeus grew to adulthood among the shepherds of Mount Ida, Crete, and then set about taking revenge on Kronus. Zeus went down to Tartarus and freed his siblings, all now grown to adulthood, as well as the three one-eyed giants called Cyclopes, and the three hundred-handed giants called Hekatoncheires, all six of whom Kronus had imprisoned there for fear they would help overthrow him. The grateful Cyclopes taught Zeus how to wield his energy-manipulating powers in battle. Zeus and his allies fought a ten year war with the Titans which ended with Zeus imprisoning most of the male Titans in Tartarus. Zeus thus became supreme ruler of the Olympian dimension.

Zeus married the goddess Hera, but he engaged in many relationships with goddesses and with mortal woman both before and during the Heroic Age of ancient Greece. Some of his children were gods, a number of whom joined the Olympian pantheon (see Known relatives); others were humans such as Helen of Troy. After the end of the Hyborian Age, as the civilization of ancient Greece began to rise, Zeus decided to make the presence of the Olympian gods known to the Greeks so that they would worship them. Zeus learned that the principal nexus between the Olympian dimension and Greece lay atop Greece's Mount Olympus, near Olympia, the principal city of the Eternals (see *Eternals*). (Zeus named his own dimension after Mount Olympus after making this discovery.) Zeus and his daughter Athena, goddess of wisdom, held a meeting with Zuras, the leader of the Eternals, and his daughter Zura. Noticing the marked physical resemblance between Zeus and Zuras and between Zura and herself, Athena suggested that the Olympian gods and the Eternals form an alliance in which the Eternals would act as the gods' representatives on Earth. Both parties enthusiastically agreed, and Zura took

her current name of Thena to signify the sealing of the pact (see *Thena*). However, over the many years, such Eternals as Zuras, Thena, Valkin, Makari, Hero, and Helios came to be thought by many humans to be not representatives of the Olympian gods, but the gods themselves. This led to a growing resentment by the gods towards the Eternals, which recently erupted into war, but is now ended.

When Christianity replaced the worship of the Olympian gods in the Roman Empire, Zeus decided that the time had come for the Olympian gods to break most of their ties with Earth. The only exception was that Neptune (Poseidon) was still allowed to watch over his worshippers in undersea Atlantis. Pluto, god of the dead, was chief among those who deplored Zeus's decree. He has made several recent challenges to Zeus's supremacy (see *Pluto*). Nevertheless, Zeus still retains an affection for and interest in the people of Earth. A millennium ago, his son Hercules led a band of soldiers he had transported from ancient Greece through time to battle Norsemen who were under the protection of the Asgardian god Thor. This led to war between the Asgardians and Olympians. Zeus secretly met with Odin, ruler of the Asgardians, and the two gods not only put an end to the war, but also formed an alliance to defend Earth from the Celestials (see *Celestials*). Zeus and Odin remain allies today.

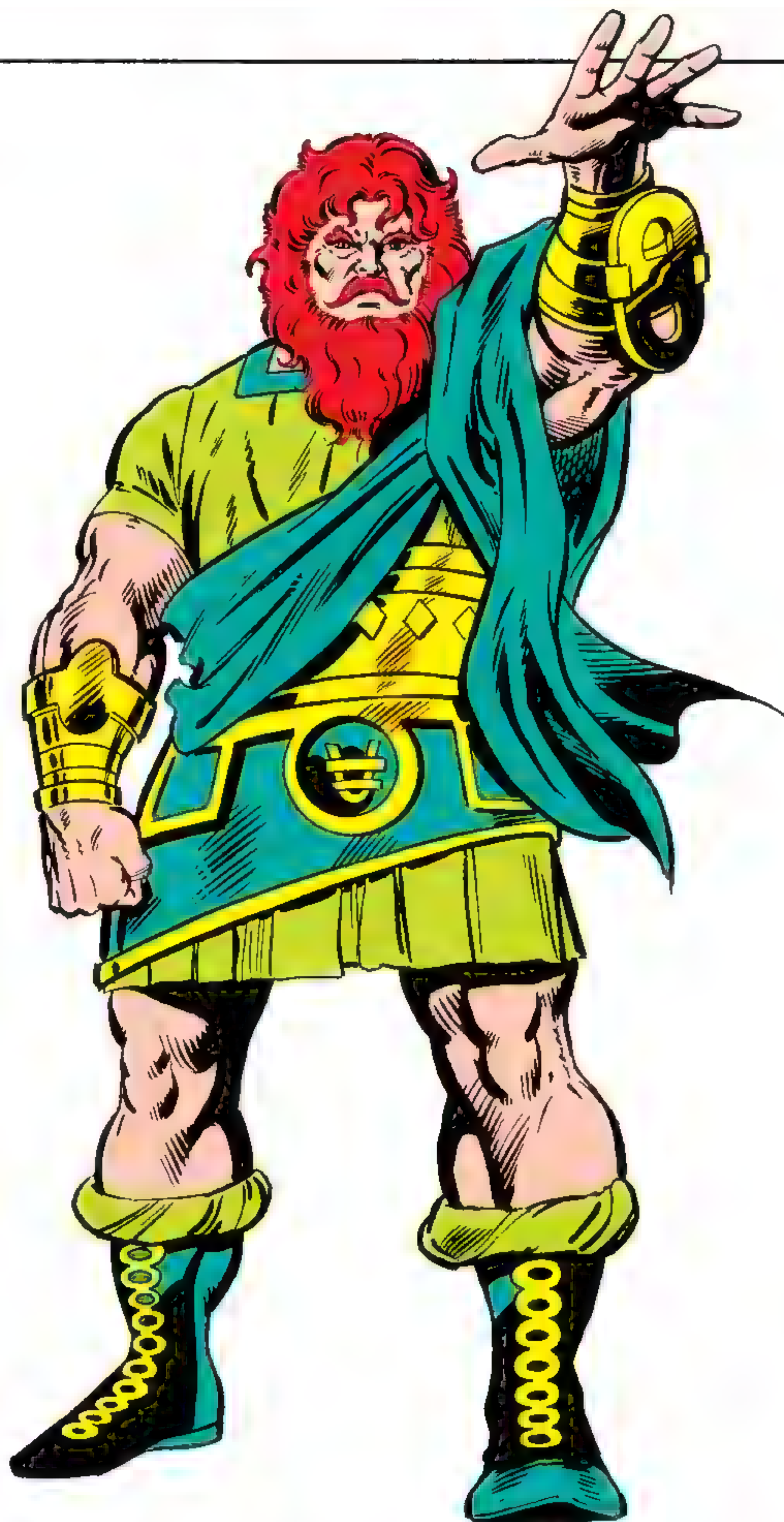
Height: 6' 7"

Weight: 560 lbs.

Powers: Zeus is the most powerful of all the Olympian gods. His physical strength surpasses that of all the Olympian gods except for that of his son Her-

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Red



cules. Zeus can lift (press) 90 tons without the use of any of his other powers. Like all Olympians he is immortal: he has not aged since reaching adulthood and he is unable to die by any conventional means. If wounded, his godly life force would enable him to recover in minutes. It would take an injury of such magnitude that it dispersed a major portion of his bodily molecules to cause him death. (Even then, it may be possible for a god of equal power, such as Odin, or for a number of Olympian gods working together, to revive him.)

Zeus's energy-wielding abilities surpass those of any other Olympian god. His ability to generate tremendous amounts of electrical energy in the form of lightning bolts from his hands has become his trademark. Zeus can generate and manipulate other forms of energy as well. Only a small number of Zeus's powers have as yet been depicted. Among these are his ability to create interdimensional apertures through which he can transport himself and even the entire Olympian army, and his ability to project his image, voice, and energy bolts from the Olympian dimension into that of Earth. Zeus can change his own shape into that of other humanoid beings (as when he impersonated Amphitryon, the husband of Hercules's mother Alcmena; see *Hercules*), of animals, or even of objects. Zeus also has limited precognitive abilities, and in ancient times maintained an oracle at Dodona. (These abilities enabled Zeus, at the time of the Trojan War, to "remember" the Asgard-Olympus war which occurred centuries afterwards.)

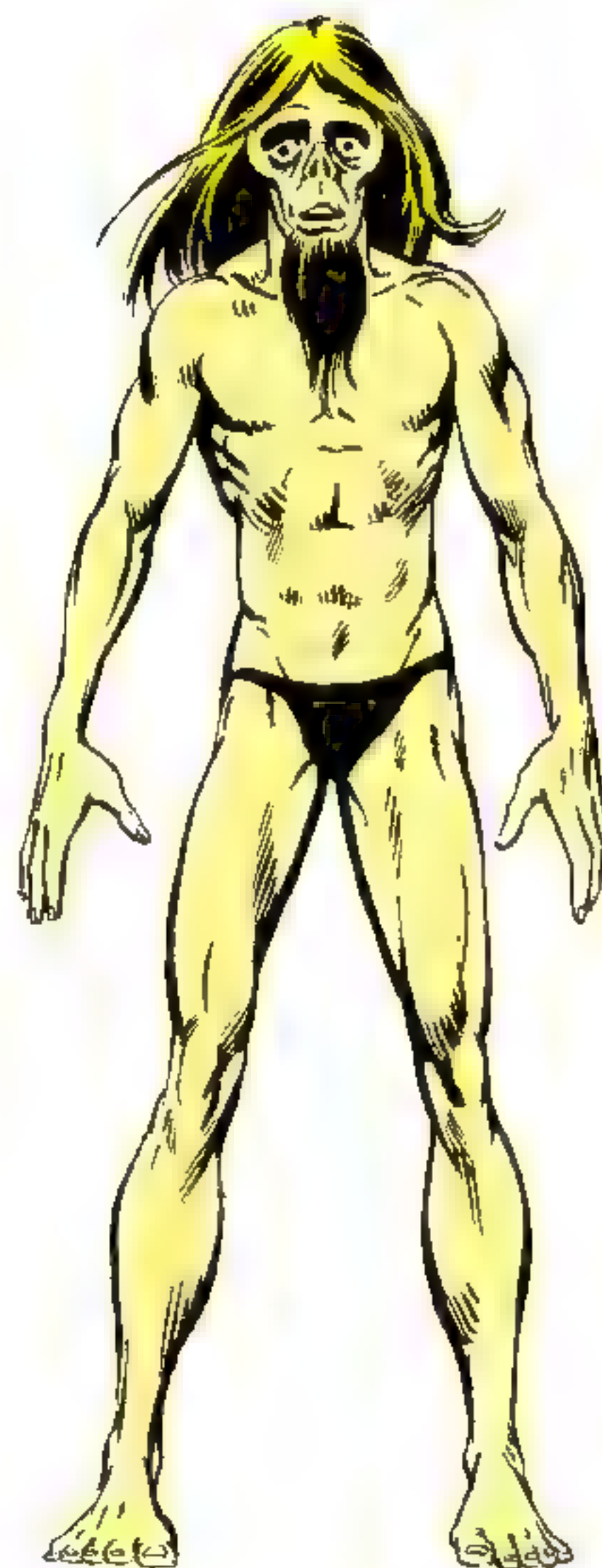
ALIEN RACES

ACHERNONIANS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: Alpha Unakalhai
 Planet: Achernon, fourth planet from sun
 Habitat: .60 of the planet's surface is volcanic rock, .40 water.
 Gravity: .85 of Earth.
 Atmosphere: .85 Earth density, high sulphur content.
 Population: 81 million
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Humanoid
 Eyes: Two
 Fingers: Five (with opposing thumb)
 Toes: Two (sharp talons)
 Skin color: Purple-grey (some body hair)
 Average height: 6' 4"
 Special adaptations: Some Achernonians possess the ability to become immaterial at will
 Type of government: Dictatorship
 Level of technology: Achernonians do not possess their own means of star travel as yet. Technology level pre-industrial.
 Cultural traits: Superstitious, self-centered, hedonistic.
 Names of representatives: Brahl
 First appearance: THOR ANNUAL #6

CENTURII



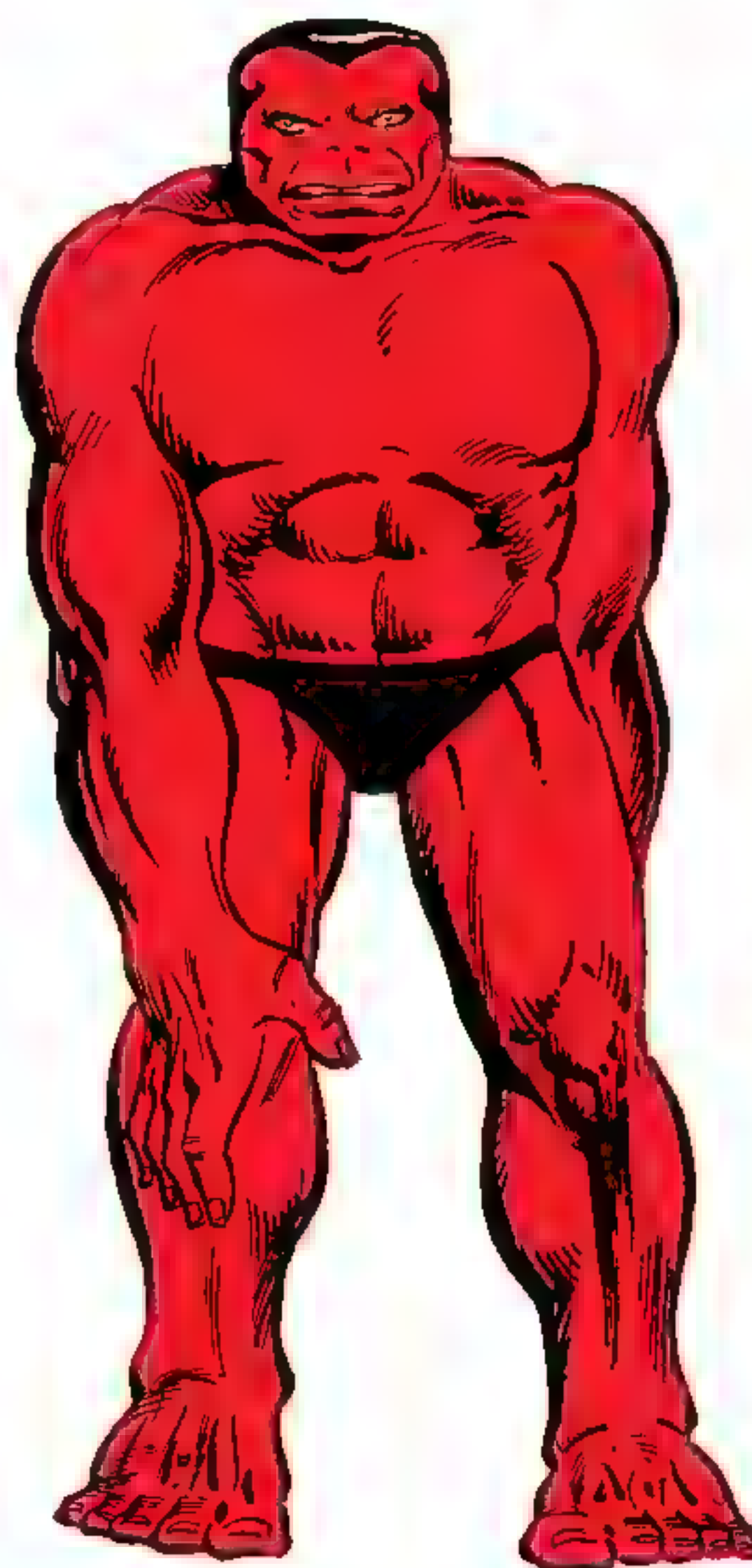
Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: Proxima Centauri
 Planet: Centuri-Six
 Habitat: .71 surface covered with water, temperate climate
 Gravity: .80 Earth
 Atmosphere: .90 Earth density
 Population: 400,000 before its conquest
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Humanoid
 Eyes: Two
 Fingers: Five with opposable thumb
 Toes: Five
 Skin color: Light yellow
 Hair: Yellow
 Average height: 5' 6"
 Special adaptations: None
 Type of government: Worldwide democracy
 Level of technology: Comparable to Earth. No interstellar travel and little weaponry.
 Cultural traits: The majority of the population are philosophers and artisans.
 Names of representatives: Gormok, former chairman of the Planet Governing Council.
 Note: The pirate starship *Bird of Prey*, commanded by the Grey Gargoyle, conquered Centuri-Six, and sold the population into slavery throughout the galaxy.
 First appearance: THOR #258

DEONISTS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: Denebola (Earth designate)
 Planet: Deo, "The Doomsday Star," formerly known as "Templeworld," fifth from sun
 Habitat: .75 desert, .25 water
 Gravity: .8 Earth's
 Atmosphere: High hydrogen content, but comparable to Earth's
 Population: 200
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Humanoid
 Eyes: Two (on head)
 Fingers: Five (with opposable thumb)
 Toes: Five
 Skin color: Pale white
 Average height: 5' 8"
 Type of government: Theocracy
 Level of technology: Highly advanced, but no new strides have been made in centuries, inasmuch as the race is becoming extinct
 Cultural traits: Fanatical
 Names of representatives: K'Rill, N'Gil (two of the "Soul-Survivors")
 Note: Deo was once the religious center of a confederation of planets, the rest of whose civilizations were destroyed by a space armada of alien warships. "The One Above All," then providing the planet with energy, exhausted himself and died in creating a wall over the world. Since then, the Deonists have captured other "gods" for use as energy.
 First appearance: THOR #261

ERGONS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: M Canum Venaticorum (Earth designate)
 Planet: Ergonar, second from sun
 Habitat: .50 water in form of ice, the rest is mountainous
 Gravity: 2.0 Earth's
 Atmosphere: .90 oxygen, .10 methane
 Population: 2.4 billion
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Humanoid
 Eyes: Two (on head)
 Fingers: Five (with opposable thumb)
 Toes: Five
 Skin color: Red
 Average height: 6' 2"
 Special adaptations: Superhuman strength, in part to combat heavy gravity
 Type of government: Variety of governments planetwide, primarily military dictatorships
 Level of technology: Intermediate level interstellar capacity. Technology otherwise comparable to Earth's.
 Cultural traits: Highly competitive, merciless, adventurous
 Names of representatives: Sklarr
 First appearance: THOR #259

ALIEN RACES

FOMALHAUTI

Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Fomalhaut (Earth designate)
Planet: Pumor
Habitat: Water covers .86 of surface, high humidity, temperature
Gravity: 3.5 Earth
Atmosphere: .68 hydrogen, .31 oxygen
Population: 7.8 billion
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Amoeboid
Eyes: One, red or yellow
Fingers: None
Toes: None
Skin color: Inapplicable
Average height: 2'5" (except mutants)
Special adaptations: Fomalhauti communicate telepathically, manipulate objects by forming tentacles. Though they resemble giant amoeba, they

are multi-cellular organisms with highly developed brains and optic nerves. They move with ease in Earth gravity.
Type of government: Democracy
Level of technology: Advanced, with intermediate interstellar capacity
Cultural traits: Highly benevolent, even to vastly different alien cultures
Names of representatives: Dumog (of normal race), Sporr (deceased, last of mutant race)
Note: While normal Fomalhauti were small and whitish, the now-extinct mutant race was pinkish and reached nearly six times the normal size and mass.
First appearance: THOR #256 (mutant race), THOR ANNUAL #6 (normal race)



GRAMOSIANS

Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Sekar
Planet: Gramos, third from sun
Habitat: Temperate climate planet-wide, .63 covered with water
Gravity: .89 Earth
Atmosphere: .68 nitrogen, .28 oxygen
Population: 1.3 billion
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Humanoid
Eyes: Two (on head)
Fingers: Five (with opposable thumb)
Toes: Five
Skin color: Blue-black
Average height: 5'11"
Special adaptations: Can discharge energy through hands
Type of government: Elective monarchy
Level of technology: Highly advanced interstellar ships. Machinery to store, transmit life force.
Cultural traits: Generally pacifistic, artistic
Names of representatives: Mercurio ("The Fourth-Dimensional Man")
Note: Years ago, Gramos's magnetic polarity changed, admitting radiation from space which caused mass insanity and death. Normalcy was restored by the debris of Xorr the God-Jewel.
First appearance: THOR #208

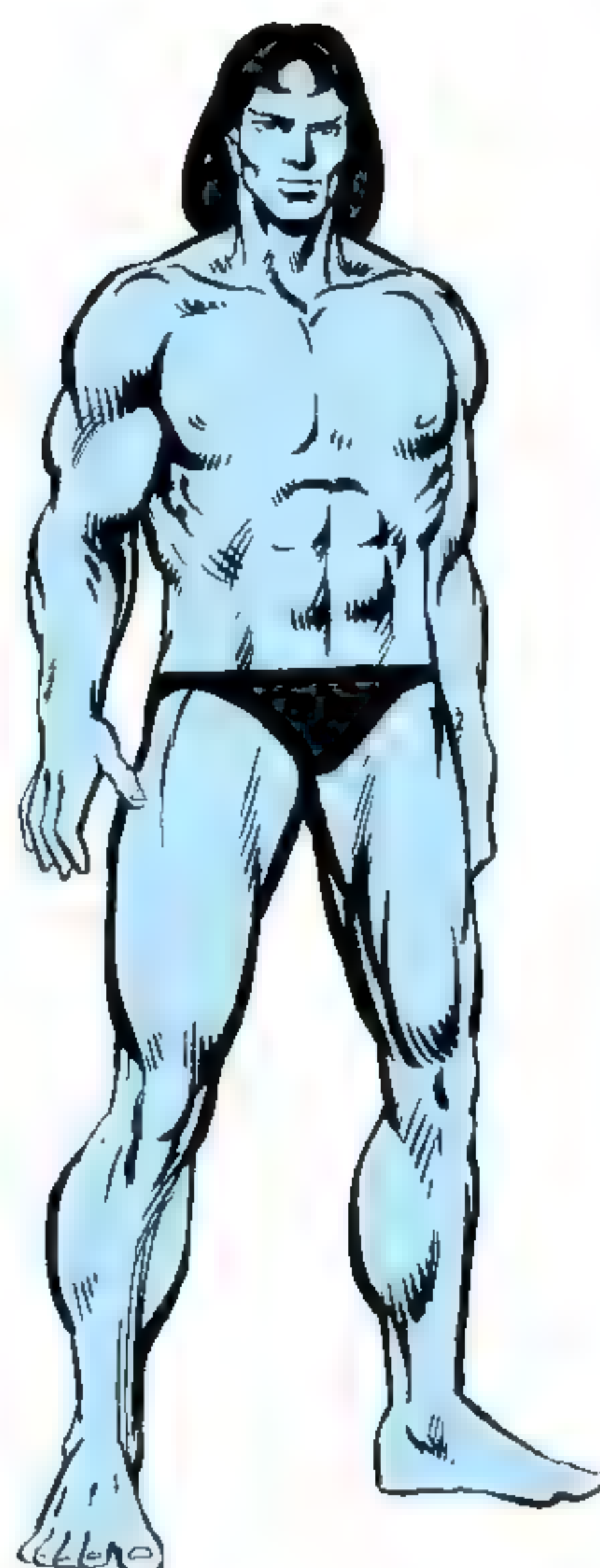


KRONANS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Krona
Planet: Ria, first from sun. **Note:** Although known as "the Stone Men from Saturn," the Kronans are not native to Saturn.
Habitat: Mountainous, .27 surface covered with ocean
Gravity: 1.3 Earth
Atmosphere: .52 methane, .18 oxygen
Population: 2.7 billion
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Semi-humanoid
Eyes: Two (on head)
Fingers: Four (with opposable thumb)
Toes: None
Skin color: Orange
Average height: 8'
Special adaptations: Kronan body chemistry is silicon-based. Their thick, virtually impenetrable stone-like hides somewhat resemble the Fantastic Four's Thing. Their strength increases in atmospheres with more oxygen.
Type of government: Military dictatorship
Level of technology: Highly advanced graviton/anti-graviton technology, used in powering their starships.
Cultural traits: Fraternal, religious, imperialistic
Names of representatives: Gorr (now deceased, not to be confused with the intelligent ape of the same name)
First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #83

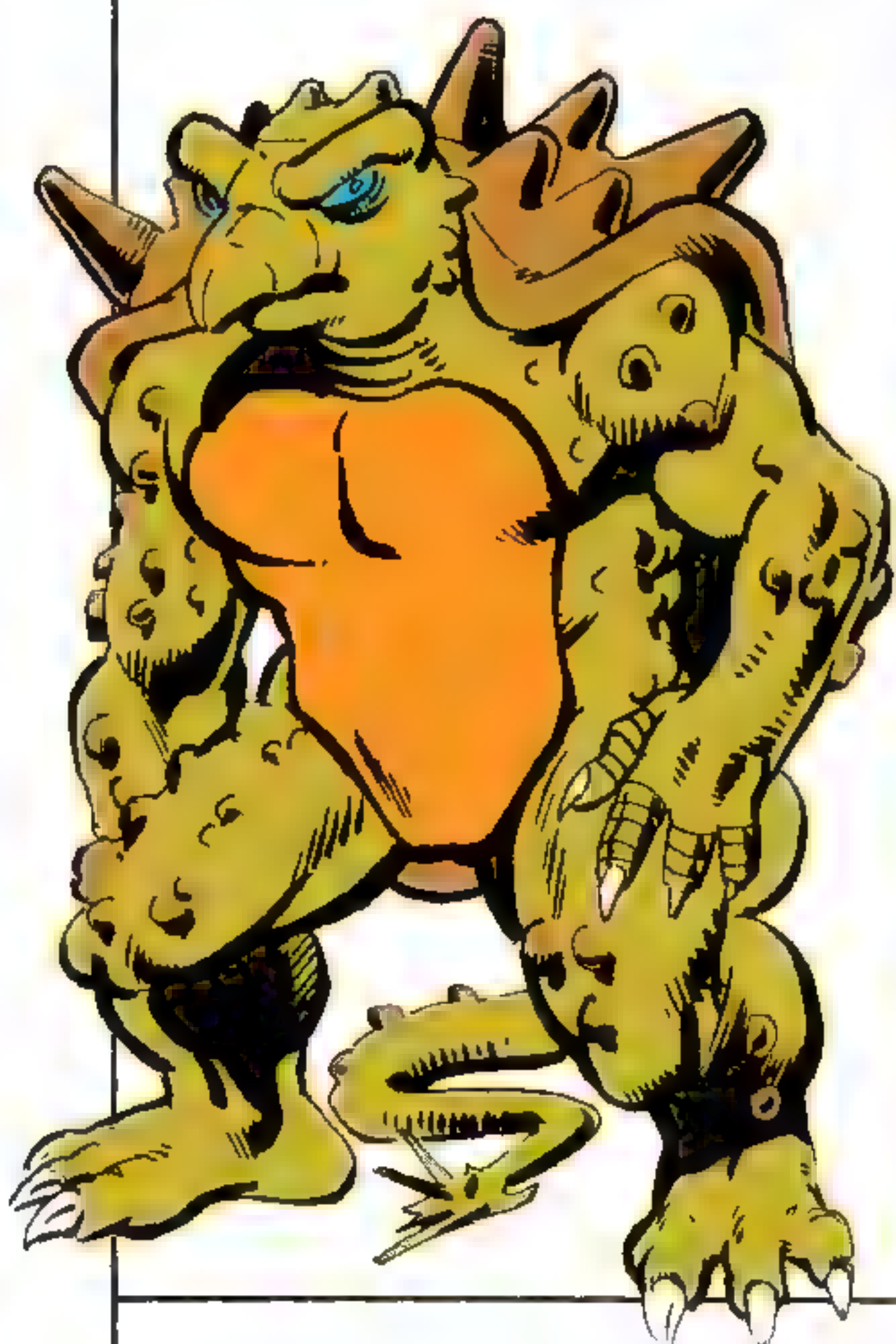
LEVIANS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Nelweni
Planet: Levia (now destroyed)
Habitat: Now non-existent
Gravity: Now non-existent
Atmosphere: Now non-existent
Population: 5 million (all living aboard "world-ship" *Levianon*)
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Humanoid
Eyes: Two
Fingers: Five (with opposable thumb)
Toes: Five
Skin color: Blue
Average height: 5'9"
Special adaptations: None
Type of government: Democratic republic led by "First Citizen"
Level of technology: Interstellar ships without warp-drive, highly advanced robots, labor-saving technology.
Cultural traits: Indolent, irresponsible, decadent.
Names of representatives: Relstor (First Citizen of *Levianon*), Sharman, Cherise, Darnak
Note: After depleting their planet of magma and resources, the Levians sent a fraction of their population aboard a starship to survive their world's imminent destruction. The survivors continued their wasteful ways and now live at a primitive level aboard their crippled, drifting ship.
First appearance: THOR #256

ALIEN RACES

PROCYONITES



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: Procyon
 Planet: Perratin, second from sun
 Habitat: Arid over much of surface, .64 covered by water
 Gravity: 1.4 Earth
 Atmosphere: .74 nitrogen, .18 oxygen
 Population: 3.4 billion
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Reptilian
 Eyes: Two, lidless
 Fingers: Four (with opposable thumb)
 Toes: Three
 Skin color: Brown shell, brown scales
 Average height: 6' 5"
 Special adaptations: Large tortoise-like shell protecting most of body
 Type of government: Large tribal nations
 Level of technology: Unimpressive. No space travel
 Cultural traits: Fierce, independent
 Names of representatives: Tork
 Note: Tork was among the minions of the Earth-born cyborg Korvac in the Thirtieth Century
 First appearance: THOR ANNUAL #6

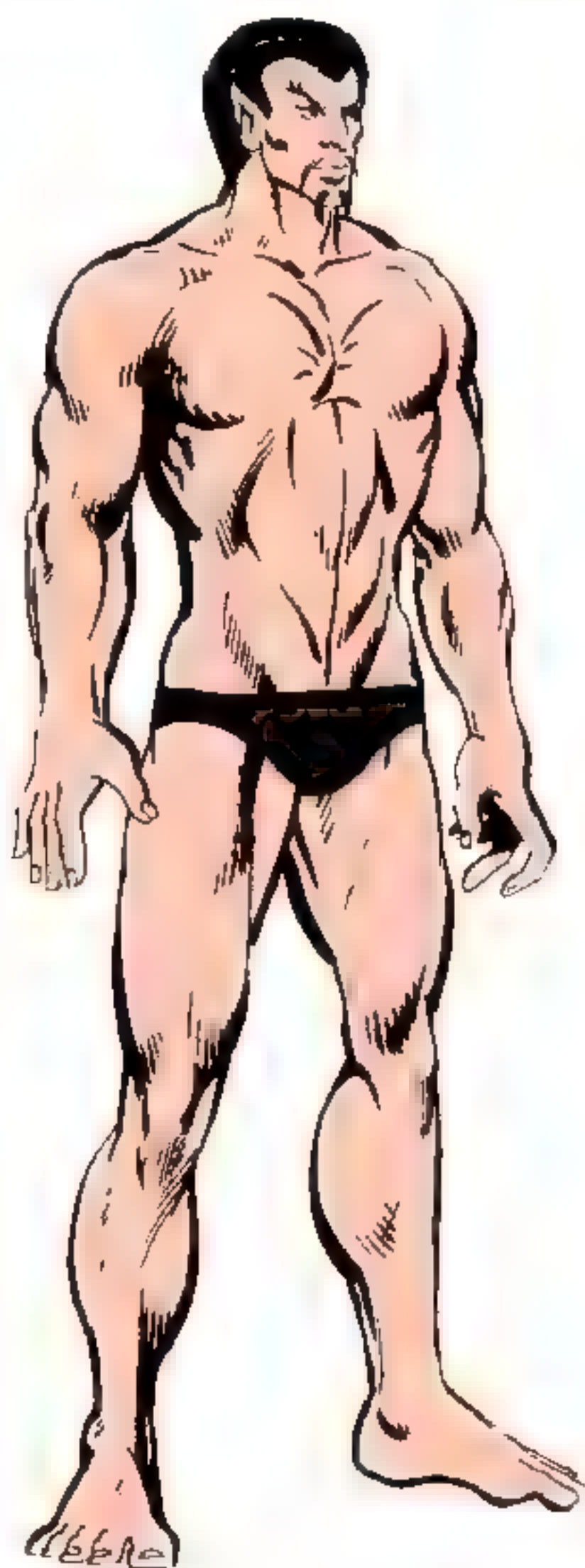
REPTOIDS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: Kormuk
 Planet: Tayp, second from sun
 Habitat: Temperate, over much of planet, small polar ice caps, .76 covered by water
 Gravity: 1.2 Earth's
 Atmosphere: .74 nitrogen, .23 oxygen
 Population: 3.6 billion
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Reptilian
 Eyes: Two, black surrounded by red
 Fingers: Four (with opposable thumb)
 Toes: Four
 Skin color: Green, scaled, with yellow underside
 Average height: 6' when standing erect
 Special adaptations: Reptoids can stand erect or walk on all fours. They have superhuman strength and can use their powerful tails as weapons.
 Type of government: Tribal
 Level of technology: Unimpressive, no interstellar travel
 Cultural traits: Savage in battle
 Names of representatives: Teju
 Note: Teju was among the minions of the Earth-born cyborg Korvac in the Thirtieth Century.
 First appearance: THOR ANNUAL #6

RHUNIANS

Origin Galaxy: Unknown
 Star System: Vulliger
 Planet: Rhun
 Note: Rhun is one of the so-called "Black Stars," five planets equidistant from their sun. Rhunian technology created immense space



warps through which the entire system moved from one galaxy to another. Although it was once within the Milky Way Galaxy, its present location is unknown.
 Habitat: Temperate, .76 covered by water
 Gravity: 3.2 Earth
 Atmosphere: .60 nitrogen, .30 oxygen
 Population: 2.8 billion
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Semi-humanoid
 Eyes: Two
 Fingers: Five (with opposable thumbs)
 Toes: Five
 Skin color: Pink
 Average height: 300"
 Special adaptations: In order to support their extraordinary mass, Rhunians constantly psionically radiate anti-gravitons to resist the tremendous pull of gravity on their bodies.
 Type of government: Oligarchy.
 Level of technology: Extremely high, capable of deriving energy through destroying stars and other planets. Interstellar ships with warp drive, although principally used by Rhunian androids called Subworlders.
 Cultural traits: Egocentric, shunning contact with alien races, willing to destroy such races for their planets' and suns' energy
 Names of representatives: Kragonn, (High Lord), Dracus
 First appearance: THOR #219

RIGELLIANS

Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
 Star System: Rigel
 Planet: Rigel-3, third from sun
 Habitat: Temperate, .77 covered by water
 Gravity: .92 Earth's
 Atmosphere: .76 nitrogen, .22 oxygen
 Population: 17.7 billion (on Rigel-3 and other planets)
 Physical Characteristics:
 Type: Semi-humanoid
 Eyes: Two
 Fingers: Five
 Toes: Five

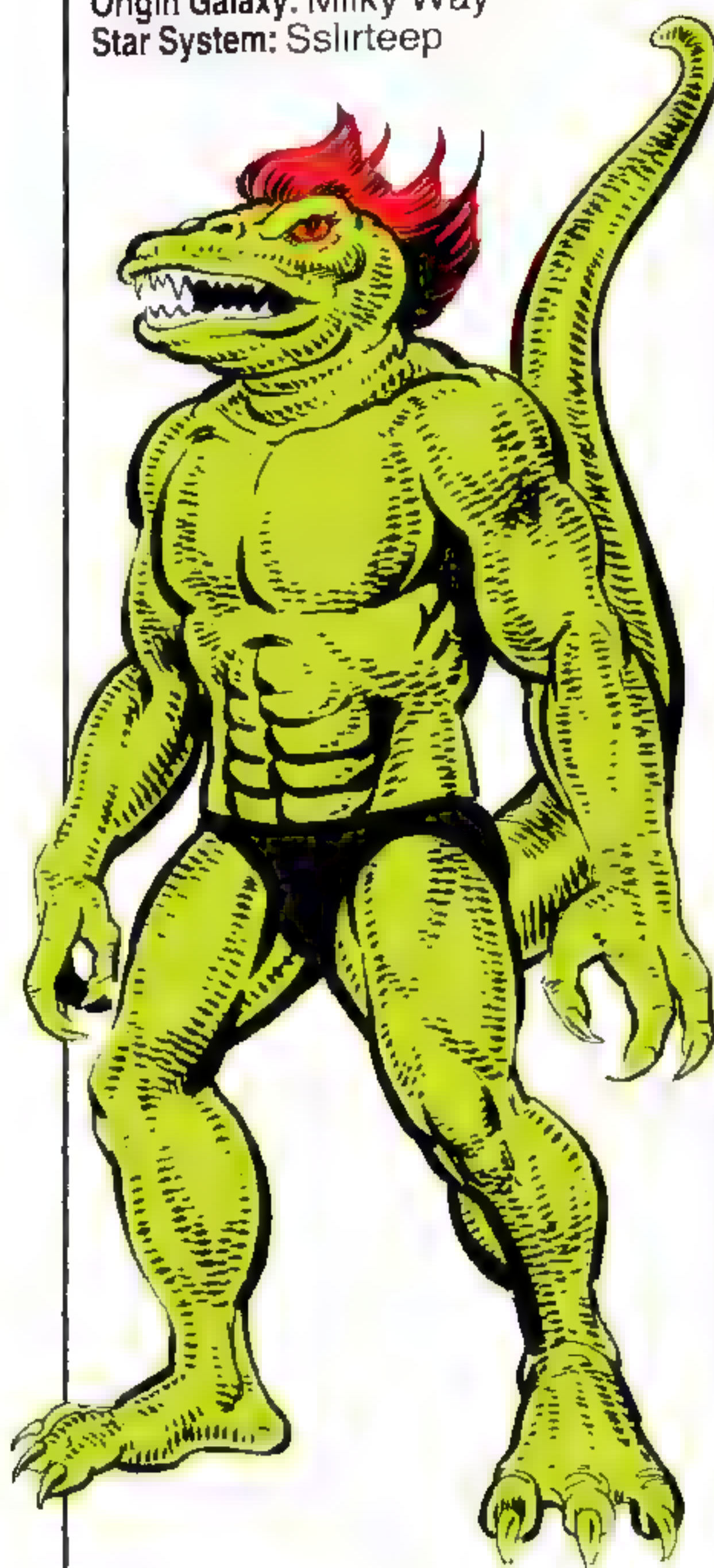


Skin color: Pale yellow
 Average height: 5' 6"
 Special adaptations: Psionic abilities allowing a Rigellian to control another humanoid's mind, or to overpower another humanoid's muscular power. Rigellians can also mentally alter their own physical density, thereby granting themselves greater strength.
 Type of government: Technocratic empire with officials chosen for their high intelligence quotient
 Level of technology: Advanced warp-drive starships, manipulation of subatomic particles, teleportation, robotics (see Recorder), ability to move planets via tractor beams and space warps
 Cultural traits: Imperialistic, methodical, basically peaceful
 Names of representatives: Tana Nile, the Grand Commissioner, Sub-Commissioner Ronhon, Wipo, Pogu
 Note: The Rigellians, also known as the Colonizers, have established a vast empire of planets in the Milky Way, Andromeda Galaxy, and other nearby galaxies. They no longer colonize the worlds inhabited by humanoids, nor do they challenge other interstellar empires (Kree, Shi'ar, Skrull).
 First appearance: (in assumed human form) THOR #129, (in true form) THOR #131

ALIEN RACES

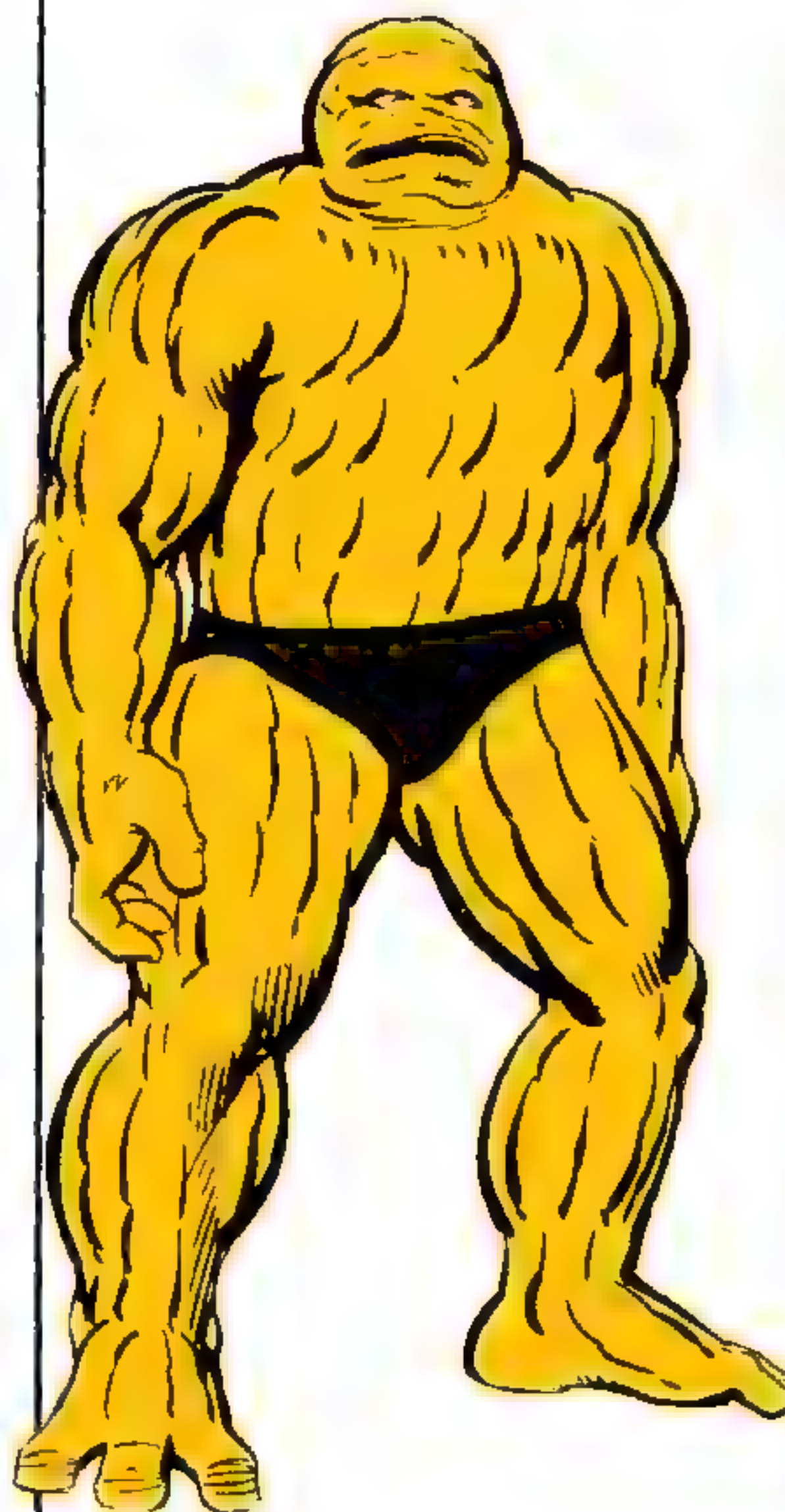
SSSTH

Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Sslirteep



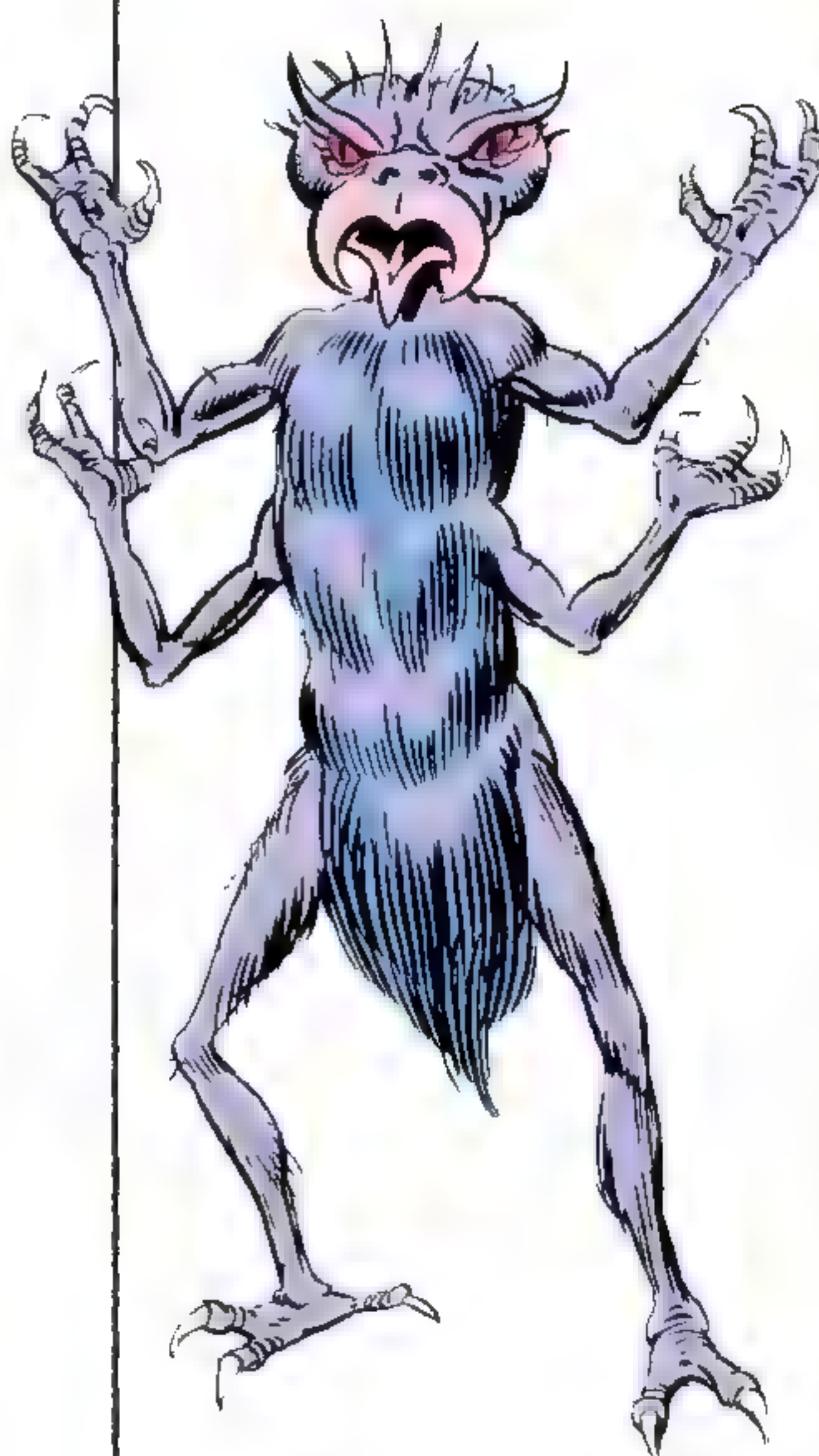
Planet: Sszardil, second from sun
Habitat: Mostly semi-tropical to tropical, .77 covered by water
Gravity: 1.3 Earth
Atmosphere: .74 nitrogen, .22 oxygen
Population: 4.3 billion
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Reptilian/semi-humanoid
Eyes: Two, red
Fingers: Three (with opposable thumb)
Toes: Three
Skin color: Green, scaled
Hair color: Red, yellow, or orange
Average height: 8'
Special adaptations: None
Type of government: Dictatorships
Level of technology: Moderately advanced warp-drive starships. Otherwise undistinguished.
Cultural traits: Treacherous, cunning, tyrannical
Names of representatives: "Sssthgar" (a name meaning "ruler of Sssth")
Note: Sssthgar formed an alliance with the Vrellnexians (see Vrellnexians) to enslave and sell intelligent beings from other worlds, using the conquered planet "Golden Star" as a base. This alliance was destroyed by Thor, the Asgardians, and the rebelling people of "Golden Star."
First appearance: THOR #212

TAURIANS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Jenzen
Planet: Taur (destroyed by Galactus)
Habitat: Nonexistent
Gravity: Nonexistent
Atmosphere: Nonexistent
Population: 200,000 (who managed to escape Taur in time)
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Semi-humanoid
Eyes: Two
Fingers: Five (with opposable thumb)
Toes: Three
Skin color: Orange
Average height: 7'
Special adaptations: Super-humanoid strength approaching Thor's, evolved in order to resist Taur's heavy gravitation. Can survive for short periods in outer space outside ships.
Type of government: Democratic republics, now nonexistent
Level of technology: Relatively primitive starships, otherwise undistinguished
Cultural traits: Melancholic
Names of representatives: None known
First appearance: THOR #160

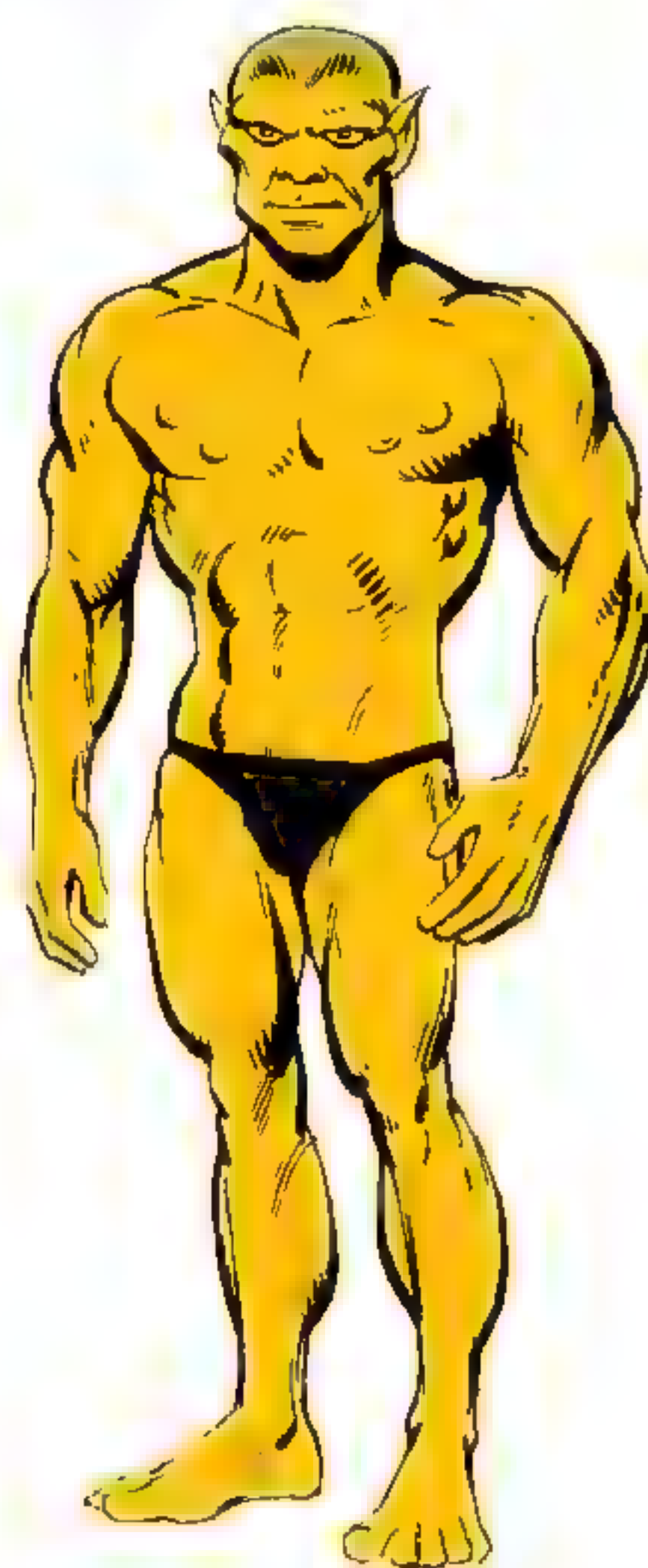
VRELLNEXIANS



Origin Galaxy: Milky Way
Star System: Cetsin
Planet: Vrellnex, fifth from sun
Habitat: Semi-temperate, .69 covered by water
Gravity: 1.2 Earth's
Atmosphere: .77 nitrogen, .20 oxygen
Population: 6.4 billion
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Insectoid
Eyes: Two, compound, red (some Vrellnexians have many more eyes)
Fingers: Three (with opposable thumbs) on each of their foremost two pairs of limbs
Toes: Three on each limb in the lower pair
Skin color: Usually purple
Average height: 5' 5"
Special adaptations: Vrellnexians stand on their hindmost pair of limbs. Vrellnexians differ widely in appearance. Some of them are winged and can fly.
Type of government: Hivelike, dominated by "queens."
Level of technology: Moderately advanced, with warp-drive starships.
Cultural traits: Total commitment to the goals of their race, virtually no concept of individuality. Ruthless in the pursuit of their goals. They maintain some commercial trade and (captured alien) slave trade with other races
First appearance: THOR #212

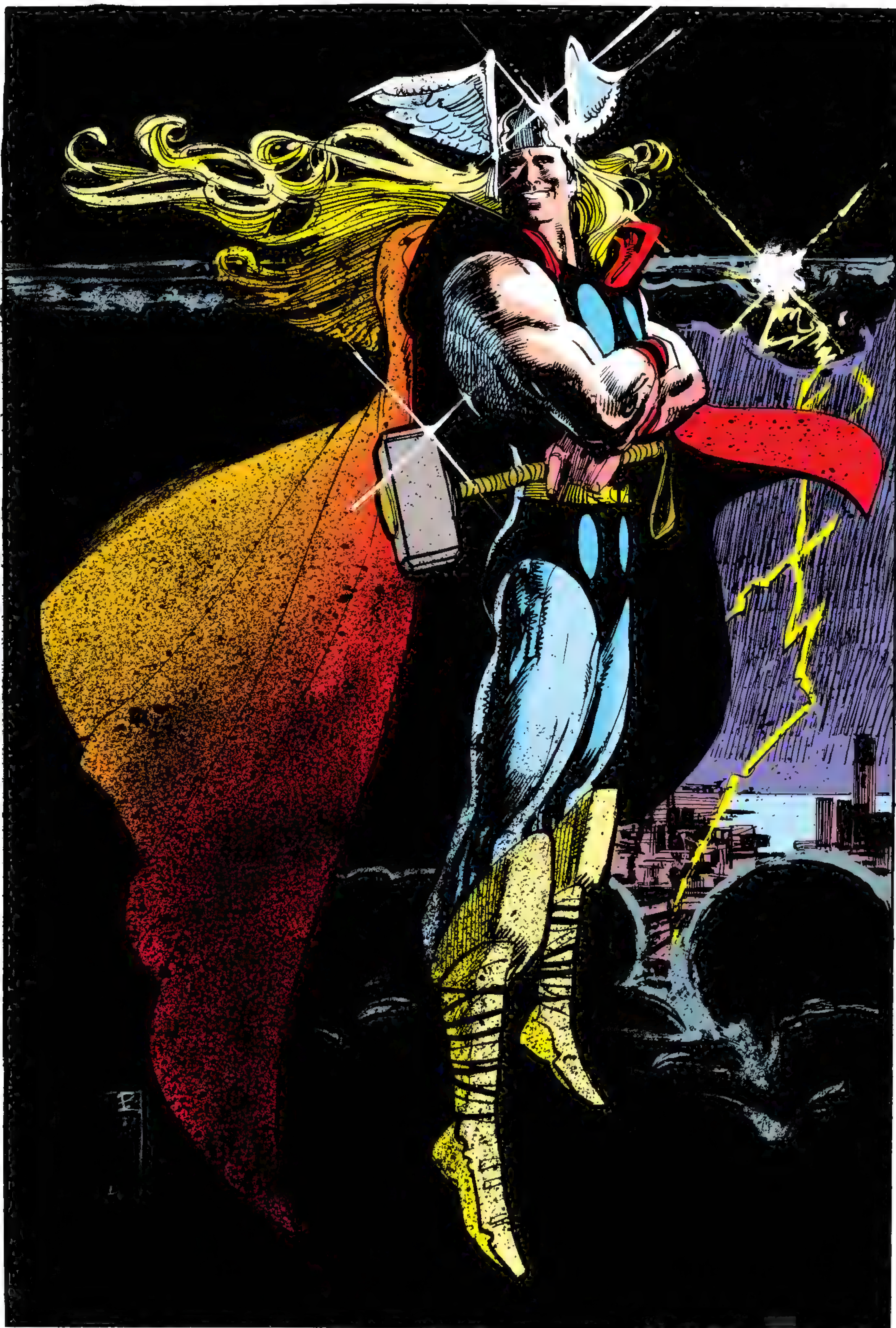
XARTANS

Origin Galaxy: Fornax
Star System: Zugano
Planet: Xarta, fourth from sun
Habitat: Mostly temperate, .77 covered by water
Gravity: 1.3 Earth



Atmosphere: .74 nitrogen, .23 oxygen
Population: 4.3 million
Physical Characteristics:
Type: Humanoid
Eyes: Two, orange
Fingers: Five (with opposable thumb)
Toes: Five
Skin color: Orange
Average height: 6' 9"
Special adaptations: Ages ago the planet Xarta was visited by Celestials who experimented upon the genetic structure of a native anthropoid life form. The Deviant race that they thus created proved to be the planet's dominant one. Xartan Deviants are metamorphs who can transform into any other kind of living beings, taking on that being's physiology, and even any superhumanoid powers it has, in the process. Xartans can turn invisible and withstand the vacuum of space for brief periods.
Type of government: Military dictatorship governing a medium size interstellar empire
Level of technology: Moderately advanced, with warp-drive starships
Cultural traits: Imperialistic, cunning, cruel
Names of representatives: Ugarth (Warlord of Xarta), Zano (his son)
Note: Xartans are colloquially called "Carbon Copy Men."
First appearance: JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #90

Marvel Fanfare #8 (May 1982) Thor pinup
by Bill Sienkiewicz



B I O G R A P H I E S

ALAN ZELENETZ

Alan Zelenetz enjoyed a prolific career writing at Marvel in the 1980s. He wrote issues of *Moon Knight*, *Avengers* and *Master of Kung Fu*, but most of his work was outside of super heroes in the sci-fi and fantasy genre. His tales of the son of Odin appeared *Bizarre Adventures*, a quartet of Annuals, a run of stories featuring the Warriors Three in *Marvel Fanfare* and an eight-issue run on *Thor*. He also wrote several stories in *The Savage Sword of Conan*, nearly the full run of the 1983 *Kull the Conqueror* series, multiple issues of *King Conan/Conan the King* and the 1989 graphic novel *Kull: The Vale of Shadow*. Zelenetz paired the Asgardian hero Thor with the Hyborian Age's Conan in an iconic team-up in *What If?* #39, "What If Thor of Asgard Had Met Conan the Barbarian?" He also helped spearhead the exhaustive *The Official Handbook of the Conan Universe*. In 1984, Zelenetz collaborated with writer Carl Potts and artist Frank Cirocco on *The Alien Legion*, a sci-fi series that was published under Marvel's Epic imprint. The writer wrote the entire twenty-issue run of the first series, as well as the 1987 graphic novel *The Alien Legion: A Grey Day to Die*. Zelenetz's last credit in comics was as author of the 1990 Epic graphic novel *Jheræg*. He left comics to become an educator and administrator, and in 2003 started the film production company Ovie Entertainment.

MARK D. BRIGHT

Illustrator Mark D. Bright was born in 1955 in New Jersey and he became an ardent fan of comic books after indulging in the stacks made available to idle children at his grandmother's hair salon. Bright graduated from Montclair High School in 1974; afterward, he would attend the Pratt Institute and earn a BFA in 1978. During his schooling, he submitted relentlessly to DC Comics, eventually drawing a pair of stories in DC's horror anthologies in the late '70s. After graduating from art school, Bright stepped up his efforts and eventually landed with Marvel in 1981, penciling issues of *Dazzler*, *Thor*, *Avengers* and the 1983 *Falcon* miniseries, before settling into long runs on *Power Man and Iron Fist* and *Iron Man*. Bright also illustrated the fondly remembered *Spider-Man vs. Wolverine* one-shot in 1987, as well as the Hawkeye serial in the *Solo Avengers* anthology. In 1988, Bright started a long association with DC's Green Lantern, first drawing the character in several installments of *Action Comics Weekly*, then in *Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn* and its sequel miniseries. In a two-year run on the flagship *Green Lantern* title, Bright illustrated stories with both the John Stewart and Hal Jordan iterations of the character. Also with DC, Bright drew multiple issues of Batman and cocreated the series *A. Bizarro* with Steve Gerber. In 1993, Bright joined other African-American comic book creators at DC's Milestone imprint, launching the series *Icon* with writer Dwayne McDuffie and drawing the series for most of its four-year run. He reunited with *Falcon* writer Christopher Priest to create *Quantum and Woody* at Valiant. In the 2000s, Bright moved increasingly towards work in film and animation storyboards, but returned to comics here and there, drawing Bill Jemas' 2003 series

Marville and a 2006 tale featuring D.P.7 in *Untold Tales of the New Universe*.

ERNIE CHAN

A pioneer of the 1960s Philippines comic book scene, Ernie Chan emigrated to the United States at 30 years old and wasted no time in breaking into his new country's comic book industry. His earliest U.S. work included inking and penciling for DC's horror anthologies. In 1973, Chan began the most fruitful collaboration of his career: inking John Buscema on *Conan the Barbarian*. The team of Buscema/Chan would provide the visual look of that title for the better part of the next 14 years, during which time Chan would also illustrate other Robert E. Howard titles including *Savage Sword of Conan*, *Kull the Destroyer*, and *King Conan*. For a time, however, Chan went exclusive to DC, where he served as Batman artist from 1975-76, penciling (and often inking) both *Detective Comics* and *Batman*. Other Chan credits include penciling the Spectre in *Adventure Comics*, *Claw the Unconquered*, *Weird War Tales* and *Jonah Hex* for DC; *Thor* and *Power Man and Iron Fist* upon his return to Marvel; and prolific cover work for both companies. He left comics in the '90s to pursue work in computer designs and TV and film animation, but maintained a presence as a popular fixture at comic conventions. Chan passed away in 2012 at the age of 71.

BOB HALL

Bob Hall has spent the entirety of his professional career balancing his twin passions of drawing and theater. A graduate of University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Hall arrived in New York City in the early '70s to pursue a career in theater. To augment his income, he took his art skills to comic books. He studied illustration under John Buscema, a tutelage which combined with his theater-born joy of storytelling helped set him on the path to working for Marvel. Hall's first gigs included penciling multiple issues of *The Champions* and *Super-Villain Team-Up* and annuals for *Fantastic Four* and *Thor*. He also served as an editor for a brief time, with Jack Kirby's *Devil Dinosaur* falling under his purview. In 1980, Hall's off-Broadway play, *The Passion of Dracula*, was adapted for Showtime's *Broadway on Showtime* cable television series. His art career took flight in the '80s, as Hall drew issues of *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Marvel Team-Up* and *Spectacular Spider-Man*, but his most memorable credit came during a pair of stints drawing *Avengers*. Other high-profile credits in the decade came with the *West Coast Avengers* miniseries and Mark Gruenwald's *Squadron Supreme* epic. Hall would return to the Avengers with the now-classic *Marvel Graphic Novel #27: Emperor Doom*, written by David Michelinie. In the '90s, Hall went to Valiant, where he wrote and drew *Shadowman* and *Armed and Dangerous*. In addition to his comics work, Hall has acted in and directed Shakespeare productions across the decades, culminating in his founding of the Flatwater Shakespeare Company in Lincoln, Nebraska in 2001. He serves as the company's Artistic Director and in 2010 received the honor of Artist of the Year from the Nebraska Arts Council's Governor's Arts Awards.

ALAN KUPPERBERG

Alan Kupperberg's experience with all facets of writing, art, advertising and design helped make him a "jack of all trades" in comics, with credits as a writer, penciler, inker and letterer. He began his career in the early 1970s in DC Comics' production department and Neal Adams and Dick Giordano's Continuity Associates studio. Kupperberg's first art credit was a single-page story in *Young Romance* #183 (June 1972). In 1974, he moved to Atlas/Seaboard where he served as a letterer, colorist, editor and production manager. After Atlas/Seaboard's demise, Kupperberg started working at Marvel, including penciling an adaptation of Robert Bloch's "The Living Dead" in *Vampire Tales* #5. He was a frequent contributor to *Crazy Magazine*, which often featured his scripts for the "Obnoxio the Clown Fun Pages." Clowns seemed to be a preoccupation for Kupperberg, as he would illustrate Frenchy the Evil Clown in *National Lampoon*, and would write, draw and letter the 1983 *Obnoxio vs. the X-Men* one-shot. Kupperberg racked up an impressive amount of fill-in and pinch-hit jobs on Marvel titles like *Captain America*, *Defenders*, *Doctor Strange* and *Avengers*, plus short runs on *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Marvel Two-In-One*, *Thor* and *Spitfire and the Troubleshooters*. He also drew several issues of *What If?* and the four-issue miniseries *Iceman*, and is perhaps best known for long runs on *Invaders* and DC's *Blue Devil*. Kupperberg also served as illustrator of the syndicated comic strips *Hulk*, *Howard the Duck*, and *Little Orphan Annie*. Kupperberg passed away in 2015.

DOUG MOENCH

A prolific writer over the last four decades, Doug Moench has made indelible contributions to Marvel and DC characters as well as developing his own creator-owned properties. After starting his career as a film reviewer for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, by 1971 he was ready to make his way into comics. Like many other writers of the time, he broke in with a story for Warren horror mag *Eerie*, after which he quickly found a home at Marvel. His initial efforts were focused on Marvel's black-and-white magazine line, including *Rampaging Hulk*, *Planet of the Apes* and *Tales of the Zombie*.

Moench's penchant for writing horror tales led to a long tenure on *Werewolf By Night*, near the end of which he introduced the brooding anti-hero Moon Knight. At around the same time, he and Rich Buckler launched Deathlok in the pages of *Astonishing Tales*. His other major achievement in the '70s was his tenure on *Master of Kung Fu*, a 10-year long saga praised by critics as a high-water mark of that era's comic storytelling.

In the midst of his work on mainline Marvel titles, he and longtime art partner Paul Gulacy developed *Six For Sirius*, a creator-owned sci-fi series on Marvel's Epic imprint; its success spawned a sequel, *Six For Sirius II*. He also co-created and wrote *Aztec Ace*, a popular indie title published by Eclipse.

By the mid-'80s, Moench had moved to DC Comics, where he took firm control of the Batman franchise, writing both *Batman* and *Detective Comics* for four years. Other DC highlights

included *Mister Miracle*, *The Wanderers*, *Omega Men* and several highly regarded *Elseworlds* graphic novels. In the '90s, he returned to Batman for a seven-year run, after which he took on *Catwoman*. His most recent credit for Marvel was *Master of Kung Fu: Hellfire Apocalypse*, a 2003 limited series that reunited him with longtime art partner and *MOKF* alum Gulacy.

DON PERLIN

A talented stalwart that put all of his creativity into his work on long-running series like *Ghost Rider* and *The Defenders*, Don Perlin plied his talents in virtually every discipline in the comic book field—penciling, inking, helping introduce new characters and sometimes editing and writing. A student of Burne Hogarth, Perlin launched his career in 1951, drawing horror comics for various publishers and also penciling Will Eisner's *The Spirit*. After serving in the Army, Perlin returned to comics with Harvey in the late '50s, as well as Charlton in the '60s. In 1973, he began his long association with Marvel finishing John Buscema's art on *Thor* and inking several titles. He took over *Werewolf By Night* from Mike Ploog, penciling and inking the book for much of the next two years. He also penciled and inked the supernatural adventures of Johnny Blaze in *Ghost Rider*, his name becoming very closely identified with Marvel's monster biker. In the '80s, he drew *The Defenders* for a long run before turning his attention to Marvel's adaptation of Hasbro's *Transformers*. His early '90s work on Valiant's *Solar*, *Man of the Atom* and *Bloodshot* was extremely popular, after which, Perlin went into semi-retirement.

CHRISTOPHER PRIEST

Christopher Priest, working under his birth name of James Owsley, broke in at Marvel as an intern and then an editor in the early '80s, working on *Crazy Magazine* and the Conan titles. He scripted the 1983 *Falcon* miniseries, was the ongoing writer for *Power Man and Iron Fist* and would pick up the writing reins on *Conan the Barbarian* for a run that renewed the title and stretched through the end of the decade. Other writing credits of this era included *The Further Adventures of Indiana Jones*, *Daredevil*, *Moon Knight* and "Gang War" in *The Amazing Spider-Man*. In 1987, Priest collaborated with artist Paul Ryan on the Thor graphic novel *I, Whom the Gods Would Destroy*. During a period with DC, he wrote a Green Lantern serial in *Action Comics Weekly*, a twelve-issue run of *Unknown Soldier* and long runs of *Justice League Task Force* and *Steel*. In 1993, Priest helped found the influential Milestone Media imprint and later launched the ongoing series *The Ray*, while in 1997, he joined up with Valiant to co-create the cult hit *Quantum & Woody*. Priest returned to Marvel in 1998 with *Ka-Zar*, but it was his Marvel Knights series *Black Panther* that would earn the highest acclaim and introduce concepts and characters that have defined Wakanda ever since. Other highlights from his second tenure with Marvel included *Captain America & the Falcon* and *Deadpool*. In 2015, after a period away from comics during which he focused on his Baptist ministry, Priest returned to comics writing and shortly after began a fifty-issue run on DC's *Deathstroke*. More recently, he has steered the iconic horror franchise *Vampirella* at Dynamite.

PAUL RYAN

Artist Paul Ryan (1949–2016) graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art in 1971 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The first part of his career was spent working in graphic design for an engineering firm, but by 1983, he was ready to act upon a childhood love of comics. He broke in at Marvel in his early 30s, later than most of his peers, and made a mark right away, drawing five issues of the influential *Squadron Supreme* miniseries. He then graduated to his first ongoing series, the New Universe title *D.P.7*, drawing it for its entire 32-issue run. In 1987, Ryan drew the wedding of Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson in the blockbuster *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* #21. That same year, he would also illustrate the Thor graphic novel *I, Whom the Gods Would Destroy*. When *D.P.7* wrapped up, Ryan took on *The Avengers* and began a two-year run, during which he also penciled nine issues of *Avengers West Coast* and the first six issues of *Quasar*. In 1991, Ryan became penciler of *Iron Man* for a substantial run, but it was his arrival on *Fantastic Four* that would make its biggest mark. For five years, Ryan illustrated “The World’s Greatest Comics Magazine,” earning the record for third-longest tenure as *Fantastic Four* artist. After moving over to DC in 1996, Ryan became the ongoing artist of *Flash* and also took part in drawing the wedding of Clark Kent and Lois Lane. After a brief stint at CrossGen, Ryan began a long tenure drawing the newspaper strip *The Phantom*.

JIM SHOOTER

Writer/artist/editor/publisher Jim Shooter broke into comics as a precocious 13-year-old after submitting a batch of *Legion of Super-Heroes* pages he had written and drawn. Impressed by what was going on at Marvel, the teenager brought his “Marvel-style” attitude to bear on *Legion*, rolling off a three-year run that concluded in 1969. During this time, he introduced several memorable Legionnaires and villains and also wrote several stories in *Superman*.

After a five-year break from comics, Shooter returned to the scene, freelancing for both Marvel and DC. He retook the reins of *Legion* in *Superboy*, and wrote various Marvel titles, which led to a staff position at Marvel in 1976 and a memorable run on *Avengers*. After two years, he succeeded Archie Goodwin as Marvel’s editor-in-chief. In his view, Marvel at that time was in editorial chaos, not capitalizing on its full potential. Only 27 years old, Shooter forced his will over all aspects of the publishing regime, establishing an incentive system for creators, streamlining the publishing schedule and enforcing his own high editorial standards on all the books. He continued Marvel’s success with licensed titles *G.I. Joe* and *Transformers* and the Epic line of creator-owned comics. Creative efforts included writing *Secret Wars* and its sequel, and building the New Universe and writing its flagship title, *Starbrand*.

Forced out of the company in 1987, a bid by Shooter to buy Marvel failed. He then formed a group to start his own company, Valiant, which produced licensed and original comics to great acclaim in the early ’90s. Despite Valiant’s success, Shooter’s tenure there was ended after losing control of the corporation.

Short-lived imprints Defiant and Broadway Comics followed but were victims of the mid-’90s industry bust. Since then, Shooter has returned to DC to write a 13-issue run of *Legion*, and overseen a revival of Gold Key characters Magnus, Doctor Solar and Turok for Dark Horse.

HERB TRIMPE

He may not have dreamed up as many characters as Kirby or Ditko, or had as groundbreaking a style as Steranko or Adams—and he’ll be the first one to tell you that! But Herb Trimpe is easily one of the most recognizable comic artists of all time, owing to the incredible popularity of two titles (*Incredible Hulk*, *G.I. Joe*) he made successes.

Herb joined Marvel’s production department fresh out of the armed forces, where he served in the Air Force as a weatherman from 1962-1966, providing weather telemetry to forces in Vietnam. In between his office duties, he landed fill-in work as a penciler and inker on books like *Kid Colt*, *Outlaw* and *Marvel Super-Heroes* #16, featuring the Phantom Eagle, a collaboration with writer Gary Friedrich that played off Herb’s well-known interest in drawing airplanes.

He also inked several books, most notably over Marie Severin’s *Hulk* in *Tales to Astonish*. Several months later, Herb got the book as his own, and from 1968 to 1975, the *Hulk*’s tales were drawn under his auspices. He combined an E.C.-influenced approach to layouts with Kirby-esque dynamics, a style that became even more pronounced when he began inking his own pencils with issue #117. Through it all, he never strayed from the elements of the character he felt had already been perfected: the pathos of a tragic figure’s Jekyll/Hyde dual personality. During his tenure, he came up with the Hulkbusters, did character designs for the likes of Wendigo and Zzzax, and also drew the first appearance of Wolverine in *Incredible Hulk* #180-182.

After the *Hulk*, Trimpe drew *Godzilla*, *Shogun Warriors* and *The Defenders*. He also drew the first several issues of Marvel UK’s *Captain Britain*. As the 1980s began, Trimpe drew a much-beloved run on *Marvel Team-Up*, but it was the launch of *G.I. Joe* that would make Trimpe’s some of the most seen comic art of the decade. An instant hit, selling hundreds of thousands of copies over multiple printings, it was the start of an incredibly successful, long-running title. In addition to the early *G.I. Joe* issues, Trimpe drew its spinoff title, *G.I. Joe Special Missions*.

Another highlight in Trimpe’s career was providing breakdown art in collaboration with Barry Windsor-Smith on the *Machine Man* limited series. Later in the decade, his workload scaled back to spot penciling and inking jobs. In 2002, he was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year Award at the San Diego Comic-Con for services rendered as a chaplain at Ground Zero after 9/11. In his retirement, he continued to delight fans with the occasional cover or short story. Trimpe passed away in 2015, leaving a legacy as one of Marvel’s most accomplished storytellers.

Biographies researched and written by John Rhett Thomas

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

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THE GOLDEN AGE

As the Great Depression wore on and the specter of war hung over America, a new storytelling medium was born: the comic book. Within their four-color pages, larger-than-life super heroes could make short work of America's foes, giving readers of all ages hope for victory against the real-life enemies that faced the United States. At the forefront of this new medium was Timely Comics, a young company staffed by such legendary creators as Carl Burgos, Bill Everett, Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee.

GOLDEN AGE ALL-WINNERS VOLS. 1-4
GOLDEN AGE CAPTAIN AMERICA VOLS. 1-6
GOLDEN AGE DARING MYSTERY VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE MARVEL COMICS VOLS. 1-7

GOLDEN AGE MYSTIC COMICS VOL. 1
GOLDEN AGE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE U.S.A. COMICS VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE YOUNG ALLIES VOLS. 1-2

THE ATLAS ERA

Seeing super heroes waning, Timely Comics evolved into Atlas Comics and took on a vast new range of genres: science-fiction tales of outer space adventures; realistic war comics; buxom jungle heroines; horror comics that would become the center of a moral panic that rocked the industry; and romance comics for the emerging teen audience. Even the classic costumed heroes of the Golden Age retooled to take on the threat of Communism. From Western gunfighters to crime to horror, the Atlas Era had it all!

ATLAS ERA BATTLEFIELD VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA BLACK KNIGHT/YELLOW CLAW VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA HEROES VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA JUNGLE ADVENTURE VOLS. 1-3

ATLAS ERA MENACE VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA STRANGE TALES VOLS. 1-6
ATLAS ERA TALES TO ASTONISH VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA TALES OF SUSPENSE VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA VENUS VOL. 1

THE MARVEL AGE

In August 1961, change hit newsstands: *The Fantastic Four* #1 did not feature the squeaky-clean heroes of yesteryear. They were real characters placed in extraordinary circumstances. They lived together, they fought among themselves — and sometimes, they even lost to the bad guys. This was more than a change in attitude: It was the beginning of something entirely different — the beginning of the Marvel Age of Comics!

Thanks to the fertile imaginations of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and others, an unending list of heroes followed the FF with ever-increasing acclaim and popularity: the Amazing Spider-Man, the Mighty Thor, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Iron Man and the X-Men, to name but a few. These were the Marvel heroes, born of conflict and a continuous struggle to balance human lives with superhuman responsibilities.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN VOLS. 1-24
ANT-MAN/GIANT-MAN VOLS. 1-3
THE AVENGERS VOLS. 1-23
THE BLACK PANTHER VOLS. 1-3
BROTHER VOODOO VOL. 1
CAPTAIN AMERICA VOLS. 1-15
CAPTAIN MARVEL VOLS. 1-6
THE CHAMPIONS VOL. 1
DAREDEVIL VOLS. 1-17
DAZZLER VOLS. 1-4
DEATHLOK VOL. 1
THE DEFENDERS VOLS. 1-8
DOCTOR STRANGE VOLS. 1-10
THE FANTASTIC FOUR VOLS. 1-25
GHOST RIDER VOLS. 1-5
HOWARD THE DUCK VOLS. 1-2
THE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-2
THE INCREDIBLE HULK VOLS. 1-17
THE INHUMANS VOLS. 1-2
THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN VOLS. 1-16
IRON FIST VOLS. 1-2
KA-ZAR VOLS. 1-3

KILLRAVEN VOL. 1
LUKE CAGE VOLS. 1-3
MARVEL RARITIES VOL. 1
MARVEL TEAM-UP VOLS. 1-6
MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE VOLS. 1-6
THE MIGHTY THOR VOLS. 1-22
MS. MARVEL VOLS. 1-2
NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. VOLS. 1-3
NOT BRAND ECHH VOL. 1
RAWHIDE KID VOLS. 1-2
THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK VOLS. 1-2
SGT. FURY VOLS. 1-4
THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN VOLS. 1-6
SPIDER-WOMAN VOLS. 1-3
THE SILVER SURFER VOLS. 1-2
THE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-8
THE TOMB OF DRACULA VOLS. 1-2
WARLOCK VOLS. 1-2
WEREWOLF BY NIGHT VOL. 1
THE X-MEN VOLS. 1-8
THE UNCANNY X-MEN VOLS. 1-15

